

## The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles:

Teach the **alphabetic code knowledge** (the relationship, or links, between the smallest sounds of speech and the letters or letter groups) by systematically introducing the letter/s-sound correspondences of the alphabetic code and teach that the code is **reversible**: **print-to-sound** for decoding and **sound-to-print** for encoding.

Model how to put the letter/s-sound correspondences introduced to immediate use with **cumulative** real written and spoken words, sentences and texts teaching the **three core skills** of:

### 1. Decoding (reading):

- i. Scan the printed word from left to right to recognise any letter groups: **t r ay**
- ii. Say the sounds for the letters and letter groups all through the **printed** word and blend (synthesise) the sounds to 'hear', or 'discern', the target word: **/t/ /r/ /ai/** "tray"
- iii. Modify the pronunciation of the word to sound like the actual spoken word if necessary.

### 2. Encoding (spelling):

- i. Orally segment (split up) all through the **spoken** word to identify the phonemes (sounds): "tray **/t/ /r/ /ai/**"
- ii. Allot graphemes (letters and letter groups) as the correct code for the identified sounds: **t r ay**

### 3. Handwriting:

- i. Hold the writing implement with the tripod grip.
- ii. Learn to write the 26 lower case letters and 26 upper case (capital) letters of the alphabet correctly (starting points and direction of formation, position on a writing line, relative sizes).

Note: *Sounds* are shown in *slash marks*: blue for consonant sounds **/t/**, **/r/**; and red for vowel sounds **/ai/**.

In the **Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles**, learners are **not** taught to *guess* the words in books from picture, context or initial letter cues and they are not asked, or expected, to read books **independently** when the words are *beyond* their current alphabetic code knowledge. Provide memorable activities to raise awareness of the need to learn **spelling word banks** where words are spelt with the same sounds and spelling alternatives.

## The English Alphabetic Code has three complexities:

The English language has a fascinating history of invasion or migration of many peoples from different countries over many centuries. This has resulted in a *rich spoken language* but a very *complex alphabetic code* for the writing system whereby the **26** letters of the **alphabet** (upper and lower case shapes) represent the **44** or so smallest sounds (phonemes) identifiable in English speech in three complicated ways resulting in nearly two hundred main spelling alternatives (letter/s-sound correspondences):

1. One sound (**phoneme**) can be represented by *one, two, three or four letters*:  
e.g. **/a/** a, **/f/** ph, **/ch/** tch, **/oa/** ough
2. One sound can be represented by *multiple spelling alternatives (graphemes)*:  
e.g. **/oa/**: o, oa, ow, oe, o-e, eau, ough
3. One grapheme (letter or letter group) can represent *multiple sounds*:  
e.g. 'ough': **/oa/** though, **/or/** thought, long **/oo/** through, **/ou/** plough, **/u/** thorough

The **English Alphabetic Code** should be taught explicitly and systematically for reading, spelling and handwriting. In addition, teach **any** letter/s-sound correspondences **incidentally as required** for individuals, groups and whole classes – within the phonics lessons, to support wider experience with literature, and to support reading and writing in the wider curriculum. Refer to an **Alphabetic Code Chart** routinely for both systematic and incidental teaching.

## The English Alphabetic Code in Phonics International:

The **Alphabetic Code Chart** below illustrates the **sounds of speech** and the **spelling alternatives** of the Phonics International programme as featured on the many FREE versions of the **Alphabetic Code Charts** at [www.alphabeticcodecharts.com](http://www.alphabeticcodecharts.com) (select your preferred 'giant' teaching chart and 'mini' learning chart) - and as shown on the **Alphabetic Code Frieze Posters** provided in the 12 units of the Phonics International programme:

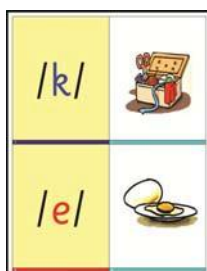
units of sound phoneme/s	graphemes, or spelling alternatives, in key words which are code for the sounds
/s/	snake glass palace house scissors [ cents city bicycle ] castle pseudonym
/a/	apple
/t/	teddy letter skipped
/i/	insect cymbals
/p/	pan puppet
/n/	net bonnet knot gnome engine
/k/	kit cat duck chameleon bouquet plaque
/e/	egg head said
/h/	hat who
/r/	rat arrow write rhinoceros
/m/	map hammer welcome thumb column
/d/	dig puddle rained
/g/	girl juggle guitar ghost catalogue
/o/	orange [ watch qualify salt ]
/u/	umbrella son touch thoroughfare
/l/	ladder shell
/ul/	kettle pencil hospital camel
/f/	feathers cliff photograph laugh
/b/	bat rabbit building
/j/	jug cabbage [ gerbil giraffe gymnast ] fridge
/y/	yawn
/ai/	aid tray table sundae cake prey eight break straight
/w/	web wheel penguin
/oa/	oak bow yo-yo oboe rope dough plateau
/igh/	night tie behind fly bike eider duck

units of sound phoneme/s	graphemes, or spelling alternatives, in key words which are code for the sounds
/ee/	eel eat emu concrete key chief sardines
or /i-ee/	sunny monkey movie
/or/	fork oars door snore four [ wardrobe quarter ] water
or /aw/	dawn sauce chalk caught thought
/z/	zebra jazz fries cheese breeze
/ng/	gong jungle /ngk/ ink uncle
/v/	violin dove
short /oo/	book should push
long /oo/	moon blue flute crew fruit soup move through
/ks/	fox plurals: books ducks cakes
/gz/	exam plurals: pegs eggs catalogues
/ch/	chairs patch /chu/ picture
/sh/	sheep chef station magician admission
/th/	unvoiced: thistle voiced: there
/kw/	queen
/ou/	ouch owl plough
/oi/	ointment toy
/yoo/	unicorn statue tube new pneumatic
/er/	mermaid birthday nurse earth world
schwa /er/ (or /u/)	mixer humour theatre
/ar/	artist father [ palm half calves ]
/air/	hair hare bear where
/eer/	deer ears adhere cashier
/zh/	television treasure azure courgette collage

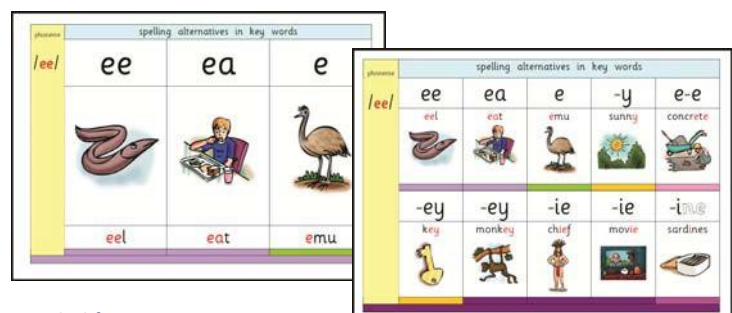
No alphabetic code chart can be definitive because of variations in accent and occasional differences in spelling ( e.g. UK compared to the USA ). Hollow letters ( e i y w qu It m f ves ) show patterns which alert readers to pronunciations or possible pronunciations dependent on the words.

## The Mnemonic System in Phonics International:

Key **picture-words** provide an 'aid to memory' system for prompting the sounds:



Key **printed words and their pictures** with highlighted graphemes provide examples of the spelling alternatives linked to the sounds:



**Optional actions** are provided for very young learners for the key picture-words in units 1 to 5.

## The Systematic Steps:

The Phonics International programme provides many 'strands' of highly practical, flexible teaching and learning resources divided into 12 units. Each unit has its own webpage which includes resources for **code to word**, to **sentence** and **text level** activities with an extensive range of supporting posters. Phonics International includes a further comprehensive body of resources called the **Early Years Starter Package** which, in effect, is like a 'programme within a programme'. This additional bank of resources provides for the same letter/s-sound correspondences in the same order as in units 1 to 6 of the Phonics International programme so all the resources are complementary. The resources in the Early Years Starter Package for units 1 to 6 are provided on one webpage.

The letter/s-sound correspondences featured on the **Alphabetic Code Charts** are introduced and revisited in the following order, with cumulative texts and spelling word banks, in the full Phonics International programme:

Grapheme order based on the core and essential multi-skills Sounds Book Activity Sheets									
<b>Unit 1</b>	s	a	t	i	p	n			
	c	k	-ck	e	h	r			
<b>Unit 2</b>	m	d	g	o	u	l	l, -ll	f, -ff	s, -ss
	b	j	y	ai	ay	ai, ay	w	oa	/oa/ ow
	oa, ow	-ie	-igh	-ie, -igh	-le	/u/ o			
	/ai/ a	/ee/ e	/igh/ i	/oa/ o	/yoo/ u	/igh/ -y			
<b>Unit 3</b>	ee	or	z	z, -zz	w	wh	w, wh		
	/ee/ ea	ee, ea	/e/ e, -ea	/z/ z -zz s -se -ze					
<b>Unit 4</b>	-ng	-nk	v	v, -ve	short oo	long oo	oo, oo	y	-y, -ey
	/ks/ -x	ch	sh	th, th	-ed	double consonant letters			
<b>Unit 5</b>	qu	/ou/ ou	/ou/ ow	ou, ow	ow, ow	oi	oy	-ue	-ue, -ue
	er	ar	-ve	-ce	s, -ss, -ce	-ge	j, -ge	-se	y, -y, -y
<b>Unit 6</b>	ce ci cy	ge gi gy	o, -oe	'o' 'oes'	-ie, i-e	ee, e-e	-oe, o-e	-ae, a-e	-ue, u-e
	/air/ air	-are	-ear	-ere	/eer/ eer	ear	-ere	-ier	
	/er/ ir	ur	ear	wor	-er, -our	-re (-er)			
	Optional extra resources for schools undertaking the statutory Year One phonics screening check in England:			/f/ f ph	/or/ or au aw	ou /ou/ /oo/	ie /igh/ /ee/	ew /yoo/ /oo/	ch /ch/ /k/ /sh/
<b>Unit 7</b>	-le	-il	-al	-el	aw	au	-al	oar	-oor
	ore	-our	/ch/ -tch	ch, -tch	/j/ -dge	-ge, -dge	-x, -x	/n/ kn	/r/ wr
	/m/ -mb	/s/ sc	/g/ gu	/b/ bu	/k/ ch	/r/ rh			
<b>Unit 8</b>	/sh/ sh, ch	/sh/ -ti	/sh/ -ci	/sh/ -ssi	/zh/ -si -s -z g -ge	/u/ -ou	'-ous'	/f/ ph	
	/f/ -gh	g, -gg, gh	ch, ch, ch	/o/ wa	/o/ qua	/or/ war	/n/ gn	/s/ -st-	
<b>Unit 9</b>	/ai/ -ey	eigh	/ai/ -ea	-aigh	/i-ee/ -ey	/i-ee/ -ie	/i/ -y	/ee/ -ie	/igh/ ei
<b>Unit 10</b>	/u/ o	/oo/ -ew	/oo/ -ui	/oo/ -ou	/yoo/ eu	/yoo/ ew	/yoo/ -iew		
<b>Unit 11</b>	/or/ ough	augh	'ough' as code for different sounds			/k/ ch	/k/ qu	/k/ -que	/or/ quar
<b>Unit 12</b>	/g/ -gue	/igh+n/ -ine	/i+n/ -ine	/ee+n/ -ine	/m/ -mn	/s/ ps	/ar/ alm -alf -alves	/o/ alt	/ch+u/ -ture
	/oa/ -eau	schwa /u/ -re	/ng/ -n						
<b>Extras</b>	Additional resources which are non-unit specific are provided on a further webpage								