

Pre-Phonics Screening Check unit

The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check usually takes place at the start of June. Its purpose is to assess whether children have learnt phonics decoding to an age-appropriate standard. Children are required to read a selection of words, both real and pseudo-words, that include common grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in order to assess their phonics knowledge and blending skills.

Preparing for the Phonics Screening Check in Phase Five Term 3

During the weeks leading up to the Phonics Screening Check (which takes place around Week 6 of Term 3), the **Revisit and review** part of the daily phonics session can be used to focus on reviewing the GPCs that the children need to know to meet the requirements for the screening check. Opportunities to review and revise graphemes are also built into the lesson plans in Weeks 1 to 6, alongside the introduction of the new graphemes. Your ongoing **Grapheme recognition check class record sheet** will help you identify the GPCs to focus on with your class in these lessons. In addition, there may be some GPCs that individual children will need to consolidate. Children could take home the relevant **Grapheme cards** together with a few **Word cards** featuring these graphemes for further practice at home.

In the **Practise** part of the daily phonics sessions, the children will have lots of opportunities to practise blending to read words, which will also help them to prepare for the Phonics Screening Check. Children’s ability to apply phonics knowledge to blend and read words should be the focus in your ongoing daily assessments, checking that the children are able to blend a range of one- and two-syllable words.

Note: Those children already identified as requiring more extensive practice should continue to receive additional small group or one-to-one support to help them best meet the requirements of the Phonics Screening Check. For example, securing blending of words with adjacent consonants (CVCC, CCVC and CCVCC), reading words containing the Phase Three and Phase Five Term 1 vowel digraphs, and reading some simple two-syllable words will ensure they have the opportunity to reach the required National Standard.

The week before the Phonics Screening Check, or earlier if you wish, you may choose to spend a week revising and preparing for the screening check. This would need to be in addition to the planned daily phonics sessions. There is an optional unit (pp.4–5) to use the week before the screening check, in addition to the ordinary phonics lesson.

The optional unit introduces the children to reading pseudo-words, such as those used in the Phonics Screening Check. Pseudo-words are used in the screening check to ensure the children use their knowledge of GPCs and their blending skills to read them. Reading pseudo-words (or ‘alien words’ as they are called in **My Letters and Sounds**) should not present a problem as the knowledge and skills the children need to decode them are exactly the same as the ones they need for unfamiliar words. However, it is important that the children understand that blending these particular words will not produce words they will recognise. You can use examples of pseudo-words from previous screening checks or the **My Letters and Sounds Alien word cards** (pp.6–8). Explain that these are imaginary words used by aliens on another planet or that they are the names of imaginary creatures from another planet. The **Alien word cards** have an alien next to the word to make it clear they are not real words. Reading alien words can be a fun and engaging way to revise GPCs and prepare for the screening check.

You should also spend time practising reading some real words, including two-syllable words (all two-syllable words in the Phonics Screening Check are real words). Some of the real words in the screening check are less common words that the children are unlikely to be familiar with. Again, this is to ensure that the children are using their phonics knowledge and skills and not just relying on their memory of a word they have met several times before. The children will be familiar with reading words like this from the daily phonics sessions and you can use words from the existing sets of **Word cards** to practise for this part of the screening check.

The table below shows the Phase Three and Phase Five GPCs that are covered in the Phonics Screening Check with corresponding alien words and a less common real word from the **Word cards** for that GPC. The **Alien word cards** can be used with your class or with individual children to help prepare for the screening check. The words cover the variety of different structures found in the screening check. Both alien words and real words are used in the optional unit (pp.4–5).

Table of GPCs covered in the Phonics Screening Check

Grapheme	Phoneme	Alien word	Real word
a	/a/ and /ar/	thack	plaster
a-e	/ai/	chake	grave
ai	/ai/	zail	brains
air	/air/	gair	flair
ar	/ar/	snarf	snarl
au	/or/	jaul	daub
aw	/or/	splaw	shawl
ay	/ai/	shay	stray
c	/c/ and /s/	drice	twice, princess
e	/e/ and /ee/	cheng	relay
ea	/ee/ and /e/	veaf*	treat, thread
ear	/ear/	zear	smear
ee	/ee/	breet	screen
e-e	/ee/	clete	theme
er	schwa /er/ and /ur/	derm	blister, expert
ew	/oo/	plew	crew
g	/g/ and /j/	groge	wage
i	/i/ and /igh/	quish	blind, pilot
i-e	/igh/	grike	ripe, invite
ie	/igh/ and /ee/	zied*	spies, brief
igh	/igh/	vight	slight
ir	/ur/	thirk	twirl
o	/o/ and /oa/	scromp	both
oa	/oa/	doafs	boast
o-e	/oa/	sproke	slope, explode
oi	/oi/	moid	joint
oo	/oo/ and short /oo/	trood*	droop, hooks

Table of GPCs covered in the Phonics Screening Check continued

Grapheme	Phoneme	Alien word	Real word
or	/or/	glort	scorch
ou	/ow/, /oo/, /oa/	glout*	sprouts, counters, youth, mould
ow	/ow/ and /oa/	hown*	scowl, glow
oy	/oi/	froy	oyster
ph	/f/	phint	phew
u	/u/ and /(y)oo/	thrunt	menu
ue	/oo/ and /(y)oo/	snue	value
u-e	/oo/ and /(y)oo/	yute	prune
ur	/ur/	wurps	churn
wh	/w/	whext	whisk

*Graphemes with alternative pronunciations: if the word is a real word, then the children must select the correct phoneme for the word; if it a pseudo-word/alien word, any of the alternative pronunciations are acceptable.

Optional Pre-Phonics Screening Check unit

Monday	Reading alien words
Revisit and review	Use the Quick-fire graphemes activity (p.148) and Phase Three Grapheme cards to quickly practise recognition of consonant digraphs and Phase Three vowel digraphs.
Introduce	Display some Alien word cards that contain consonant digraphs and Phase Three vowel digraphs or trigraphs: thack, snarf, breet, quish, moid, trood, glort, cheng, wurps, vight, doafs, zail, gair. Explain that these are imaginary words used by aliens on another planet (or that they are types of imaginary creatures), and that we read them in exactly the same way as any other new words, by saying the sounds and then blending them together. Ask the children to sound and blend the first two or three words – they should do this together as a class so that you can check that they understand what to do.
Practise	Ask the children to read the other Alien word cards on display. Point to the words, without indicating how the children should read them. The children should sound-talk and read each word in their heads or in pairs, then say it out loud when you say <i>It says....</i>
Further practice	Display a page of pseudo-words from Section 1 of a past Phonics Screening Check and ask the children to read those.
Tuesday	Reading words with one or two consonant strings in different word structures
Revisit and review	Use the Quick-fire graphemes activity (p.148) and Phase Three and Phase Five Grapheme cards to practise recognition of digraphs that require further practice.
Introduce	Display a list of less common real words with adjacent consonants (ones that the children are unlikely to be able to read straight off): snarl, slight, droop, scorch, twirl, hooks, joint, boast, blind, brains, stray, sprouts. Explain that although these are real words, the children will probably need to say and blend the sounds before they can read them. Read the first two words together to recap blending words with consonant strings.
Practise	Practise reading the words using the Points accumulator activity (p.39). Point to each word, without indicating how it should be read. The children should sound-talk and read the word in their heads or in pairs, then say it out loud when you say <i>It says....</i> Award one point for a CCVC or CVCC word (snarl, slight, droop, scorch, twirl; hooks, joint, boast). Award two points for CCVCC words (blind, brains) or words with a consonant string of three letters (stray, sprouts).
Wednesday	Reading alien words with Phase Five Term 1 digraphs, including split digraphs
Revisit and review	Use the Quick-fire graphemes activity (p.148) and Phase Five Term 1 Grapheme cards to practise recognition of Phase Five Term 1 digraphs.
Introduce	Display Alien word cards with Phase Five Term 1 digraphs: chake, shay, jaul, splaw, veaf*, plew, thirk, froy, snue, clete, grike, sproke, yute, phint, whext. Remind the children that the picture of an alien shows that these are imaginary words, but they should read them in exactly the same way as other new words by saying the sounds and blending them together. Read the first two Alien word cards together. Use the alien word ‘chake’ to remind the children about split digraphs where ‘e’ is on the end. Sound and blend ‘chake’ together.
Practise	Ask the children to read the other Alien word cards , as on Monday . Note any digraphs that cause a problem, paying particular attention to split digraphs.
Further practice	You could then display a page of pseudo-words from Section 2 of a past Phonics Screening Check and ask the children to read those. Alternatively, you could display examples of real words with split digraphs (grave, theme, ripe, slope, prune) and ask the children to read those.

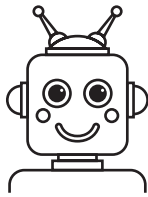
*Either the /ee/ or /e/ pronunciations of this alien word are acceptable.

Thursday	Reading two-syllable real words with 5, 6, 7 and 8 letters
Revisit and review	Practise recognition of digraphs in words using the Lucky dip activity (p.34). Select a Phase Five Word card for each digraph requiring further practice. Ask the children to spot the digraph and read the word.
Introduce	Display a list of two-syllable real words, made up of 5, 6, 7 and 8 letters: relay, pilot, value, invite, oyster, expert, plaster, explode, blister, princess, counters. Explain that these are real words, but that the children will probably need to break them up into two parts, saying the sounds and blending each part before they say the complete word.
Practise	Practise reading the words using the Points accumulator activity (p.39). Point to each word, without indicating how it should be read. The children should sound-talk and read the word in their heads or in pairs, then say it out loud when you say <i>It says....</i> Award one point for a five-letter word, two points for a six-letter word and so on.
Further practice	Display a page of two-syllable words from a past Phonics Screening Check and ask the children to read those, awarding points as before.

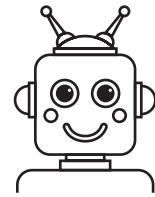
Friday	Reading words with digraphs noted as needing more practice
Revisit and review	Use the Quick-fire graphemes activity (p.148) to practise recognition of digraphs from past Phonics Screening Checks noted as needing further practice.
Introduce	Display a list of words that contain the digraphs (or structures) noted as needing more practice. You may want to have a short list of alien words and a list of real words. Read the first two words in each list together to recap identifying digraphs and sounding and blending words.
Practise	Ask the children to read the other words in each list. Tell them whether they are real words or alien words. Point to the words, without indicating how they should read them. The children should sound-talk and read the word in their heads or in pairs, then say it out loud when you say <i>It says....</i>
Further practice	Display pages of real words from a past Phonics Screening Check and ask the children to read those.

Alien word cards

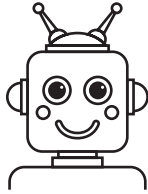
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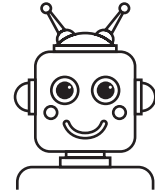
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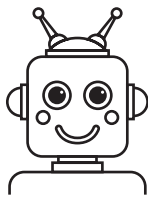
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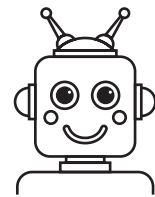
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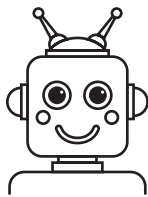
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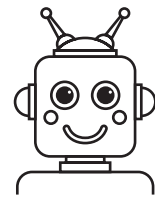
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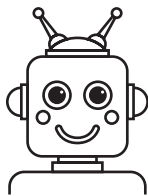
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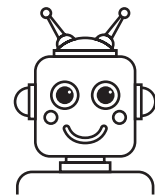
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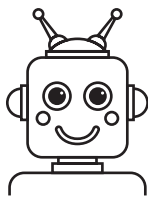
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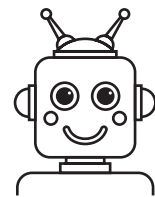
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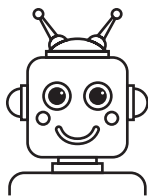
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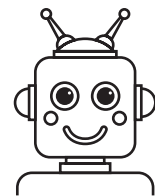
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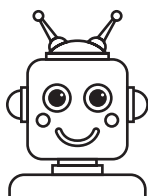
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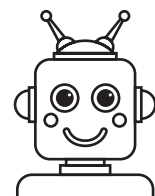
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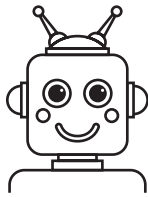


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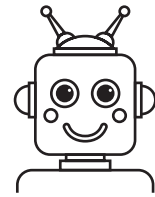


Alien word cards

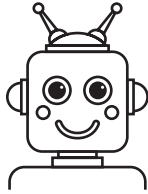
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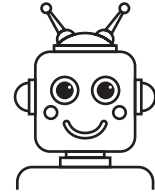
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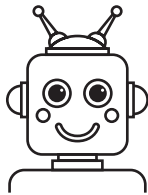
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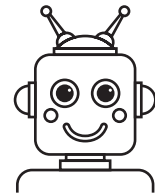
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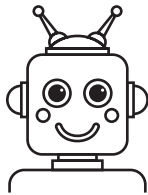
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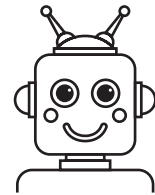
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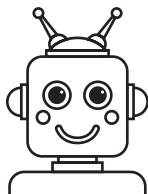
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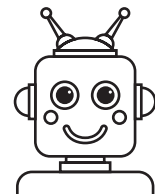
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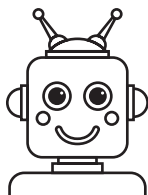
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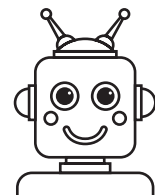
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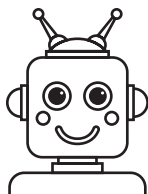
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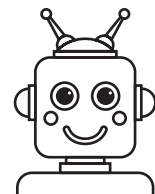
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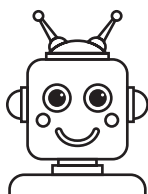
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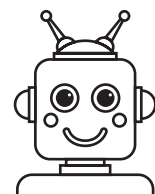
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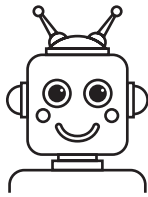


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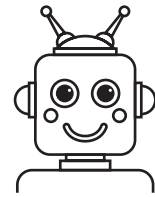


Alien word cards

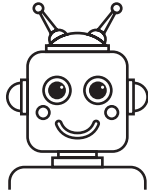
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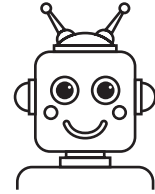
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