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Phonics – learning letter sounds

What is phonics?

Words are made up of letters and each letter stands for a different sound. When you know the letter sounds you can build up the words. This is called phonics.

Why is phonics important?

Phonics gives young readers important clues when they are working out what a word is. To use phonics, young readers need to learn the following.

- To listen for sounds in words.
- To recognise which letter shape makes which sound.
- To blend letter sounds together to read words.

How can I help my child learn about phonics?

Books like the **Sound Stories** in the **Daisy Lane Home–School Readers** series use rhyme and word play to focus on the sounds of words and letters: they introduce phonics in a ‘fun’ way.

- Rhyme helps to focus on words that end with the same sound, but have a different sound at the start of the word.
- Sentences or jingles made up of words beginning with the same letter help to focus on the sound of particular letters.

Brainwave

Go on a letter hunt – at home or when you are out. Look at signs, instructions, packaging; car number plates are great for capitals!

Remember

Teach your child the letter *sounds* before the letter *names*. Teach *lower-case* letters before *capitals*. Introduce letter names and capitals later, as your child gains confidence.