

A Parent's guide to the Key Stage 1 Phonics Screening test

What is the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check is an assessment tool, to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. The checks consist of 40 words and non-words that your child will be asked to read one-on-one with a teacher.

It will identify the children who need extra help so they are given support by their school to improve their reading skills. They will then be able to retake the check so that schools can track children until they are able to decode.

Who is it for?

The screening check is for all Year 1 pupils and children in Year 2 who previously did not meet the standard of the check in Year 1.

Is it compulsory?

Yes. It is a statutory requirement for all schools to carry out the screening check.

When will it happen?

June 2020.

How long does the check take?

Every child is different, but most children take around ten minutes to complete the test.

Who carries out the screening check?

Mrs Preece will carry out the test. This could be moderated by an outside agency, who can sit in on the test.

How is the check structured?

It will be a short, simple screening check to make sure that all children have grasped fundamental phonic skills. It comprises a list of 40 words and non-words, which a child will read one-to-one with a teacher. Half of the words cover phonic skills which tend to be covered in Reception, and half of the words are based on Year 1 phonic skills.

What are 'non-words'?

The check will contain a mix of real words and 'non words' (nonsense words, monster words, alien words) Your child will be told before the check that there will be non-words that he or she has not seen before. We use 'alien words' when we teach phonics, so your child should be familiar with the concept. Children cannot read the non words by using their memory or vocabulary, they have to use their decoding skills. This is a fair way to assess their ability to decode.

Why are 'non-words' used in the test?

Non-words are included because they will be new to all children, so there won't be a bias to those with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words. Children who can read non- words should have the skills to decode almost any unfamiliar word. The non-words are presented alongside a picture of an imaginary creature, and children can be told the non-word is the name of that type of creature. This helps children to understand the non-word should not be matched to their existing vocabulary.

Isn't it stressful to test such young children?

The assessment is age-appropriate, with children sitting with a teacher who they know. Reading one-to-one with a teacher is a familiar activity for Key Stage 1 children. It should be an enjoyable activity for children and takes no more than a few minutes. The children have been tested once a month using the same format, so they should be comfortable with the test itself.

What is the pass mark?

The threshold in 2019 was 32 words out of 40. The pass mark for 2020 is unknown to teachers and will be revealed after the screening check in June.

What skills do children need to meet the standard of the phonics screening check?

All children need to be able to identify sounds associated with different letters, and letter combinations, and then blend these sounds together to correctly say the word on the page. The same skill is needed whether the word is a real word or a non-word. The words gradually get harder through the check as the combinations of letters become more complicated. Children will also need to recognise 'alternative' sounds in real words, such as 'y' in the word happy having the pronunciation 'e'.

What happens if a child does not meet the standard?

The screening check will identify children who have phonic decoding skills below the level expected for the end of Year 1 and who therefore need extra help. Schools will be expected to provide extra help and children will then be able to retake the assessment in Year 2.

How will the results from the phonics screening check be used?

Schools' results will not be published, although all schools will tell parents their child's results.

How can I help my child at home?

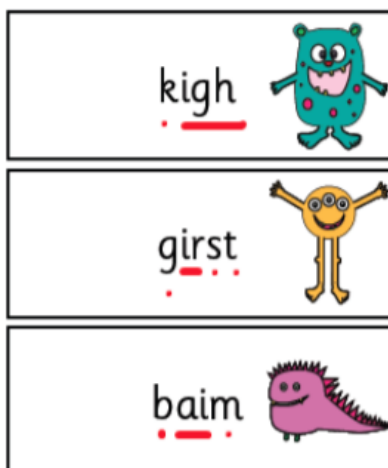
Practice the sounds with your child.

Initial sounds

s	a	t	p	i	n	m	d	t	o
g	c	k	u	b	f	e	l	h	sh
r	j	v	y	w	th	z	ch	qu	x
ng	nk								

Further sounds and their pronunciation

ay: <u>may</u> I <u>play</u>	ea: cup of tea	ai: snail in the rain
ee: what can you <u>see</u>	oi: spoil the boy	oa: goat in a boat
igh: fly <u>high</u>	a-e: make a cake	ew: chew the stew
ow: <u>blow</u> the <u>snow</u>	i-e: nice smile	ire: fire fire!
oo: <u>poo</u> at the <u>zoo</u>	o-e: phone home	ear: hear with your ear
oo: <u>look</u> at a <u>book</u>	u-e: huge brute	ure: sure it's pure?
ar: <u>start</u> the <u>car</u>	aw: yawn at dawn	tion: (celebration)
air: that's not <u>fair</u>	are: share and care	tious / cious:
ir: <u>whirl</u> and <u>twirl</u>	ur: purse for a nurse	(scrumptious / delicious)
ou: <u>shout</u> it <u>out</u>	er: a better letter	
oy: <u>toy</u> for a <u>boy</u>	ow: brown cow	e: he me we she be



Practice a mix of non-words and real words.

Ask your child to draw 'sound buttons' underneath each sound, to show they can correctly identify each one. Say all the sounds individually then put the word together.

k-igh = kigh
g - ir - s - t = girst
b -ai ---m = baim

REAL WORDS

argue	invite	pursue	sort
bead	jaunty	queue	sphinx
chew	ladder	quiet	statue
drawer	lawn	quit	theft
escape	main	renew	threw
evening	moan	repeat	thundering
fairground	pew	rocker	tie
flute	pie	rule	trash
fork	pole	scratch	turning
golf	prophet	seventh	use
gran	proud	shelving	value
handstand	prune	sighting	woe

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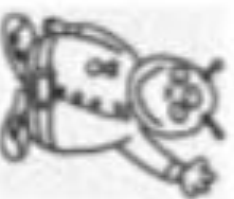
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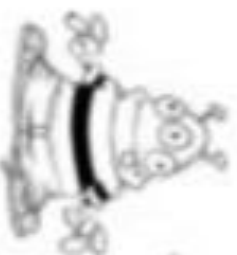
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numper

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swoat

nurn

scaub

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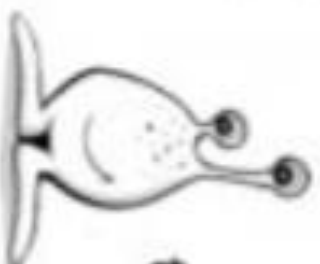
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Make learning sounds fun!

There are lots of websites available to help your child with their phonics.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/phonics/>

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>

http://www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics_games.html <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/> <http://phonicsplay.co.uk/>

<http://www.mrthorne.com/>

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

www.phonicsplay.com

Phonics play has some excellent resources using 'non words'

Don't forget about your reading books and library books. Practicing reading daily automatically helps with decoding!