

Preschool Phonics Phase 1.7

Oral Blending and Segmenting

A Guide for Parents

Preschool and nursery phonics focus on pre-reading skills. These are speaking and listening skills, being able to distinguish the sounds they hear, patterns of speech, and sounds of speech. Phase 1 of the phonics programme is split into seven aspects; each builds on the previous aspect.

This guide introduces the seventh and final aspect of Phase 1 Phonics: Oral Blending and Segmenting

Simply put, children learn to break up spoken words into syllables. This builds on all of the previous Phase 1 aspects: recognising rhythm, rhyming, hearing initial sounds and making voice sounds.

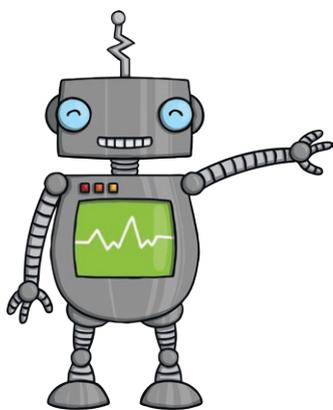
These segmenting and blending skills are really easy to develop through everyday life. Break the words you say up into distinct syllables. Say “Dinn-er time” or “Ti-dy up time,” for instance. When your child has mastered this, break down some words further, e.g. “Your jumper is r-e-d.” or “Can you put you sh-oes in the b-o-x?” Always remember to use the letter sounds rather than the letter names.

Once your child has mastered all seven aspects of Phase 1 phonics, they will be ready to begin Phase 2, where they will begin to learn written letters, their sounds and to read and spell three-letter words. There is no rush to complete Phase 1 - some children will be five and in full-time school before all of these skills are mastered. These skills form the basis for your child’s reading and writing skills - the stronger their skills in this aspect of the phonics programme, the easier they will find the next phases.

The first skill your child will need to learn is to hear the syllables in words. You can help your child by clapping or stamping to the rhythm of the spoken words - one clap per syllable.

Pretend to be a robot!

At nurseries and preschools and with childminders, the children will usually develop and practise this through their own play and in the everyday language practitioners use. They may also carry out small-group activities and will always be supported and encouraged by adults who are knowledgeable about your child’s development.



The most important thing you can do is make time to listen to your child. Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones and really listen to them!