

Terminology

Alien words A child-friendly term for 'pseudo-words'.

Blend To combine individual phonemes into a whole word, working all the way through from left to right.

Digraph A grapheme using two letters to represent one phoneme. With children, we frequently reinforce it with the mantra 'two letters, one sound'.

Fluency The ability to read accurately with speed and expression.

Grapheme A letter or group of letters used to represent a particular phoneme when writing.

Phoneme The smallest unit of sound that can be identified in words.

Sound button A graphic device to help children recognise the separate phonemes in a printed word. Sound buttons can be used as a support in the early stages of learning. For each word, a dot is placed under any single-letter grapheme and a short horizontal line under the group of letters that form a digraph or trigraph, as shown below

bird
· — ·

Split vowel digraph A digraph representing a vowel sound where its two letters are split by an intervening consonant (for example, 'a_e' in 'take').

take
· ·

Tricky words High-frequency words that, although decodable in themselves, cannot be decoded by children initially. Many tricky words cease to be tricky in the later stages of our programme.

Trigraph A grapheme using three letters to represent one phoneme.

