



How can I support my child at home?

Recognising/ writing sounds (this can apply all the way up to Level 6 phonics):

Going on a sound hunt: Begin by picking a sound and writing it down. Encourage your child to look around the house and find objects beginning with that sound/ containing that sound. Can they draw the different objects and use their sounds to attempt to label their pictures?

I-spy: Have a group of objects or focus on objects around the room. Say “I spy with my little eye something beginning with __, I spy something with the ‘ee’ sound in” and get them to guess which object it could be.

Odd one out: Have several objects (all of them beginning with the same sound, except one). Can they point out which one is the odd one out? Can they sound out the word e.g., c-a-t? Can they say why it’s the odd one out e.g., “they all begin with ssssss. This begins with a?”

Sound scrapbook: Create a scrapbook with a sound written at the top of each page. Can they use magazines and cut out objects/ words that begin with that sound? If they have found pictures, can they then use their sounds to label the picture they have stuck in?

“What does it start with?” box: Have a box of objects beginning with different sounds. Pick a sound, can they find an object beginning with that sound? Or give them an empty box and tell them a sound. Can they go around the house and gather suitable objects to fill the box?

Sound/ word spot: When reading with your child, encourage them to look for sounds on the page. Can they find a word beginning with __? Can they find a word starting with the same sound as their name? Can they recognise the word ‘the’ on the page?

Splat the sound: Have sound cards, sounds written on stones, sounds written in chalk on the ground. Shout out the sound- can they run and splat it by jumping on, splatting with a spatula? This could also be a word/ high frequency words e.g., fish, the, be, lunchbox.

Writing in different ways: Use chinks, water and paintbrushes on the ground, whiteboards, writing on cardboard boxes, writing on the back of old wrapping paper, a tray with shaving foam,

Blending to read (oral blending too!):

Simon Says: Give your child an instruction with some key words broken down into sounds. E.g., “go and get the p-o-t” or “put your hands on your h-ea-d”. Can they swap roles and give you an instruction instead?

Robot instructions: Pretend to be a robot, can they get you a c-u-p or a p-e-n? Can they blend the sounds you say to understand what they need to get?

Guess my word: Begin by sticking a post it note onto their head or a sticker stuck onto their back with a simple word written on it e.g. mat, dog and cup. Sound out the word and get your child to blend the sounds to guess what the word is. Repeat and swap roles, so that your child can sound out the word that you are wearing and recognise the different sounds.

Word hunt: When your child has learnt a new sound e.g. igh, have that sound visible around the house. Write words containing that sound and hide them around the house. Can they find the words and sound them out?

Segmenting to write:

Unjumble the word: Get your child to write some sounds on post it notes or use magnetic letters. First, give them the sounds of the word you want them to write, but in the wrong order. Model sounding out the word and get them to unjumble the sounds to make the word. When they're more confident, you could get them to find the sounds themselves out of a bigger set.

Unjumble the sentence: Think of a sentence e.g., the cat is black. Get your child to write the words randomly on post it notes (not in the correct order). Tell them the sentence and get them to rearrange the post it notes to make the sentence. Can they reread the sentence they've made?

What am I drawing? Pick a sound and have it visible e.g. ay. Draw a picture to match a word with that sound in, e.g., tray, play, say. Can they guess your picture? Can they write the 'ay' word for your picture?

Let's write a story: With your child, take it in turns to write a story. You could do this, writing one word each or one sentence each. E.g., Child: The man was at the park. Adult: He saw a dog. Child: The dog had soft, brown fur.

Which spelling is that? When your child begins to learn alternative spellings e.g. ay, ai, a_e, have each spelling visible. Say a word, can they write it down with the correct spelling of the sound and stick it underneath the sound? This could be displayed/ in a scrapbook and added to every day/ every week.

General reading ideas:

Environment sound spot: When out in the local environment, encourage your child to read labels, road signs and posters. When shopping, encourage your child to read your shopping list and find an object by looking out for labels and signs. Can they write their own shopping list before they go shopping?

Learning the alphabet: Write out the alphabet or use letter cards/ magnetic letters. Hide some of the letters- can they work out which letters are missing?

Upper- and lower-case matching: Have the lower- case and upper-case letters written- can they match them together? Write a sound down- can they write the matching upper-case letter?

Balloon fun: Write sounds/ high frequency words/ simple words on balloons. Hit the balloons around the room. Get your child to pick a balloon and read what it written on it. Can they think of a word beginning with the sound? Can they tell you a sentence with the word in?

Beat the clock: Pick a new sound e.g., 'ie'. Set a timer- how many words can they write/ read using that sound before the timer goes off?

Play Bingo: This could be with a newly learnt sound, simple words, high frequency words.

Create your own boardgame: Draw a blank board game template or print from the internet.