

# Twinkl Phonics Glossary for Parents and Carers



Subject  
Leaders

Phonics has a large, technical vocabulary and as your child progresses through the Twinkl Phonics scheme, you may hear them and their teachers refer to their phonics teaching and learning using specific phonics terms. Below are some examples of the terminology they might use when discussing phonics. In order to create a cohesive whole-school approach to phonics, it is helpful for parents and carers to use the same terminology as teachers. Look out for Kit's Top Tips as these also include ways in which you can help your child at home.

Terminology	What does it mean?
<b>Synthetic Phonics</b>	<p>A method of teaching reading and writing in which words are broken up into their smallest units of sound - 'phonemes'.</p> <p>Children learn to associate a written letter or group of letters, known as 'graphemes', with each phoneme.</p> <p>Sounds are then built up - 'blended' - together into words for reading or whole words are broken down - 'segmented' - into their sounds for writing.</p>
<b>Phoneme</b>	<p>A single sound that can be made by one or more letters e.g. s, k, z, oo, ph, igh.</p> <p><b>Kit's Top Tip:</b>  When starting phonics, avoid using the letter names (see, ay, tee, etc) and use the sounds instead (c, a, t)! This will help your child with spelling and recognising letter sounds when reading. Letter names can be introduced more gradually in Level 3.</p>
<b>Grapheme</b>	<p>A written letter or a group of letters which represent one single sound (phoneme) e.g. a, l, sh, air, ck.</p>
<b>Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence (GPC)</b>	<p>The relationship between sounds and the letter or letters that represent that sound.</p>

## Terminology

## What does it mean?

### Pure Sound

Pronouncing each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end e.g. 'f' not 'fuh'.

#### Kit's Top Tip:

It is tricky to say some sounds without the 'uh' sound at the end – like b, d, v and g! Try to emphasise the main sound when talking about these graphemes. Some are easier to say by dragging the sound out e.g. 'ffffff' rather than 'fuh' or 'mmmmm' rather than 'muh.'



### Blending

Saying the individual sounds that make up a word and then merging or 'blending' the sounds together to say the word – used when reading.

### Segmenting

This is the opposite of blending (see above). Splitting a word up into individual sounds – used when spelling and writing.

#### Kit's Top Tip:

Play word games with your child that encourage them to build words and recognise individual sounds in words e.g. word jigsaw puzzles, I-Spy and making collections of objects that contain the same letter sounds at either the beginning, middle or end.



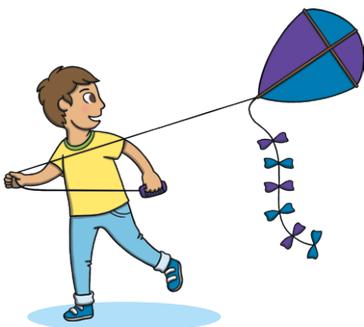
### Consonant

Most letters of the alphabet (excluding the vowels: a, e, i, o, u).

### Vowel

The letters a, e, i, o, u.

These can sound like short vowels (a, e, i, o, u) or long vowels (ai, ee, igh, oa, ue).



## Terminology

## What does it mean?

### CVC Words

An abbreviation used for consonant-vowel-consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds.

Some examples of CVC words are:

cat, pen, top, chat (because 'ch' makes one sound).

••• ••• ••• —••

Other similar abbreviations include:

- VC words e.g. on, is, it.  
•• •• ••
- CCVC words e.g. trap, black.  
••• ••• —
- CVCC words e.g. milk, fast.  
••• •••

### Digraph

Two letters which together make one sound e.g. ee, oa, ea, ch, ay.

There are different types of digraph:

- **Vowel digraph:** a digraph which makes a vowel sound, e.g. 'oa' in 'boat' and 'ay' in 'day'.
- **Consonant digraph:** two consonants which make one sound, e.g. 'sh' in 'shop' and 'th' in 'thin'.
- **Split digraph:** See below.

### Trigraph

Three letters which make one sound e.g. 'air' in 'fair' or 'dge' in 'bridge'.

### Split Digraph

Two letters, which work as a pair to make one sound but are separated within the word, e.g. 'a\_e' in 'cake' or 'i\_e' in 'pine'.

### Tricky Words/ Common Exception Words (CEWs)

Words that are difficult to sound out because they don't follow regular spelling patterns or because they contain graphemes the children haven't learnt yet, e.g. said, the, because.

They are referred to as 'tricky words' in Levels 2, 3 and 4 of Twinkl Phonics and then they are referred to as Common Exception Words or CEWs in Levels 5 and 6. This is to ensure we are using age-appropriate terminology.

#### Kit's Top Tip:



Have some tricky word flashcards around the house and use them to practise reading and word recognition. Can your child find any of the tricky words in their reading books?

## Terminology

## What does it mean?

### Adjacent Consonants

Two or more consonants that appear next to one another within a word. For example, in the word 'stop', the 's' and 't' are adjacent consonants because they appear next to each other but they still make separate sounds.

### Mnemonic

An illustration that is designed to support children's recognition of GPCs (see above for GPC definition).

### Alien Words

Words that include sounds that the children have learnt which are not real, e.g. 'gleeb' or 'zum'. These are also referred to as 'pseudo' or 'nonsense' words.

Alien words are included in the year 1 Phonics Screening Check, a test completed by all year 1 children in June each year, as a way of assessing their ability to blend sounds into words.

### Sound Buttons/Bars

Circles or spots that can be written underneath a sound to support reading. Digraphs and trigraphs can often be identified by having a line underneath them called a sound bar.

Children are taught to say the sound as they touch the sound button or bar underneath each phoneme.

