



St Thomas More Phonics Overview

The Twinkl Phonics scheme outlines 6 Levels which usually begin in Reception and end in Year 2. The overview of the levels is below.

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Autumn	Level 1 and 2	Level 3 and 4 recap (where appropriate and then Level 5	Review level 5 recap (where appropriate) then Level 6
Spring	Level 3	Level 5	Level 6
Summer	Level 3 and 4	Level 5	Level 6

Level 1 often begins in a child's pre-school setting and is developed throughout Reception. It focuses on listening to, making, exploring, and discussing sounds. The level includes seven aspects, developed through games:

1. General sound discrimination: environmental sounds
2. General sound discrimination: instrumental sounds
3. General sound discrimination: body percussion
4. Rhythm and rhyme
5. Alliteration
6. Voice sounds
7. Oral blending and segmenting

By the end of Level 1:

- Children will have experienced a range of listening activities, including songs, stories, and rhymes.
- Many children will be able to distinguish speech sounds, blend, and segment words orally.
- Some children will recognize spoken rhymes and provide rhyming strings.

Note: Inability to rhyme does not prevent progression to Level 2, as these skills continue to develop throughout the year.

By the end of Level 1, children will have experienced a wealth of listening activities including songs, stories and rhymes. They will be able to distinguish between speech sounds and many will be able to blend and segment words orally. Some will also be able to recognise spoken words that rhyme and will be able to provide a string of rhyming words, but inability to do this does not prevent moving on to Level 2 as these speaking and listening activities continue throughout the year to ensure all children are making excellent progress.



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Level 2

The purpose of this Level is to teach at least 19 phonemes/graphemes and 4 digraphs (two letters making one sound) and move children on from oral blending and segmenting to using letters/ graphemes. By the end of Level 2, most children should be able to read some short words using a vowel and consonant such as 'it, as, up' and vowel, consonant, vowel words such as 'cat, dog, hat' etc.

During Level 2, the children will be introduced to reading simple captions. They will also learn to read some tricky words.

At St Thomas More, we use set actions to teach the initial letter sounds and use a letter formation rhymes to help the children form the letters. The actions and letter formation rhymes are sent home daily. Alongside these, children are sent home with weekly flash cards to support parents reinforcing what is being taught in school, at home.

Core Teaching	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
Focus GPCs	s a t p	i n m d	g o c k	c k e u r	h b f l	ff ll ss 's' saying /z/	Revise weeks 1-6
Focus Tricky				to, the	no, go, l	Revise all taught tricky words	Revise all taught tricky words
Example Words	at sat pat tap sap	sit pin nap tin dad map did man	gap pig pop top cap cot Kit kid	ten peg sun rip rug tuck kick sock	hen bus fun hot leg bed fit log	huff kiss bell pigs is cuff fell hiss	Revise all words taught so far.

By the end of Level 2 children should:

- ✓ give the sound when shown any Level 2 grapheme.
- ✓ find any Level 2 grapheme, from a display, when given the sound.
- ✓ be able to orally blend and segment CVC words such as 'cat' or 'dog'.
- ✓ be able to blend and segment in order to read and spell words such as: if, am, on, up.



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Level 3

The purpose of Level 3 is to teach another 28 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters making one sound (digraphs) (e.g., oa), so the children can represent phonemes (sounds) by a grapheme (letters). Children also continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation in this level and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions. They will learn letter names, learn to read some more tricky words and begin to spell some tricky words.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9
Focus	j v w x	y z zz qu ch	sh th (unvoiced) th (voiced) ng	ai ee igh oa	oo (short) oo (long) ar or	ur ow oi ear	air ure er	Practise all Level 3 GPCs	Practise all Level 3 GPCs
Sight Words for Reading	Revise all Level 2 Sight Words	he, she	we, me, be	was	my	you	they	here	all, are
Sight Words for Spelling		the, to		no, go, l					

	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Focus	Trigraphs and consonant digraphs	Letter sounds and vowel digraphs	Practise all Level 3 patterns.
Sight Words for Reading	Recap: was, my	Recap: we, they	Revision of all Level 3 sight words.
Sight Words for Spelling			the, to, no, go, l

By the end of Level 3 children should:

- ✓ give the sound when shown all Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes.
- ✓ be able to blend and read CVC words (e.g., single-syllable words consisting of Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes, such as 'fish' or 'goat'.
- ✓ be able to segment and make a phonemically plausible attempt at spelling words using Level 2 and Level 3 graphemes, such as 'b-oa-t.'



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Level 4

The purpose of Level 4 is to consolidate children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. For example, words which begin with the adjacent consonants 'str, thr, spl' and contain more than one syllable, such as 'splashing'. There are no new sounds to learn in this level.

Core Teaching	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Focus	CVCC Words	CCVC Words	Adjacent Consonants	Polysyllabic Words	Three-Letter Adjacent Consonants
Focus Tricky Words (reading)	said, so	have, like, come, some	were, there, little, one	do, when, out, what	Revision of all Level 4 tricky words
Focus Tricky Words (writing)	he, she, me, we, be	was, you	they, are, all	my, here	Revision of all Level 4 tricky words

By the end of Level 4 children should:

- ✓ give the sound when shown any Level 2 and Level 3 grapheme.
- ✓ be able to read words containing adjacent consonants (e.g., spl, thr, str such as string.)
- ✓ be able to blend and read words containing more than one syllable, such as farmyard.
- ✓ read CVC words at speed, along with the tricky words from the previous levels.



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Level 5

The purpose of Level 5 is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for some graphemes, e.g., the 'ou' grapheme makes a different sound in the words 'mouth' and 'shoulder'. Children become quicker at recognising graphemes and at blending the phonemes they represent. When spelling words, they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words. We can teach children how to make 'best bets' (best guess) when spelling new or unfamiliar words.

Week	Sounds	Common Exception Words (Reading)	Common Exception Words (Spelling)	Grammar Focus	
Level 5	1	'ay' saying /ai/	could, should	said, so	Letters, Words and Sentences
	2	'oy' saying /oi/	would, want	have, like	Finger Spaces
	3	'ie' saying /igh/	oh, their	some, come	Full Stops
	4	'ea' saying /ee/	Mr, Mrs	were, there	Capital Letters
	5	'a_e' saying /ai/	love, your	little, one	
	6	'i_e' saying /igh/ 'o_e' saying /oa/	people, looked	do, when	
	7	'u_e' saying /oo/ and /yoo/ 'e_e' saying /ee/	called, asked	what, oh	
	8	'ou' saying /ow/	water, where	could, should, would	Capital Letters (names of people, places and 'I')
	9	Long Vowel Sounds	who, why	want, their	
	10	'ch' saying /c/ 'ch' saying /sh/	thought, through	Mr, Mrs	
	11	'ir' saying /ur/	work, house	love, your	
	12	'ue' saying /oo/ and /yoo/	many, laughed	people, looked	
	13	'ew' saying /oo/ and /yoo/	because, different	asked, called	Connectives - and
	14	'y' saying /ee/	any, eye	water, where	
	15	'aw' and 'au' saying /or/	friend, also	who, why	
	16	'ow' and 'oe' saying /oa/	once, please	thought, through	
	17	'wh' saying /w/	live, coming	work, house	Question Marks
	18	'c' saying /s/ 'g' saying /j/	Monday, Tuesday	many, laughed	



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Week	Sounds	Common Exception Words (Reading)	Common Exception Words (Spelling)	Grammar Focus	
Level 5	19	'ph' saying /f/	Wednesday, brother	because, different	Exclamation Marks
	20	'ea' saying /e/	more, before	any, eye	
	21	'ie' saying /ee/	January, February	friend, also	Singular and Plural Words
	22	Adding -ed to unchanged root words	April, July	please, once	
	23	Adding -s and -es	scissors, castle	live, coming	
	24	Adding -er and -est to adjectives	beautiful, treasure	Monday, Tuesday	
	25	'tch' saying /ch/	door, floor	Wednesday, brother	Capital Letters (days of the week)
	26	Adding -ing and -er to verbs	favourite, bought	more, before	Connectives - or
	27	'are' and 'ear' saying /air/	autumn, gone	January, February	Connectives - but
	28	Unspoken 'e'	know, colour	April, July	
	29	'ore' saying /or/	other, does	scissors, castle	
	30	Adding un- (prefix)	talk, two	beautiful, treasure	

By the end of Level 5 children should:

- ✓ give the sound when shown any grapheme that has been taught.
- ✓ for any given sound, write the common graphemes.
- ✓ apply phonic knowledge and skill as the prime approach to reading and spelling unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable.
- ✓ read and spell phonically decodable two-syllable and three-syllable words.
- ✓ read automatically all the words in the list of 100 high-frequency words.
- ✓ accurately spell most of the words in the list of 100 high-frequency words.
- ✓ Children's spellings should be phonetically plausible by the end of Level 5.



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Level 6:

The beginning of Level 6, children will have already learnt the most popular grapheme- phoneme correspondences. They will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words, they will in many cases be able to decode them quickly and quietly using their well-developed sounding and blending skills. With more complex unfamiliar words they will often be able to decode them by sounding them out. At this stage, children should be able to spell words phonemically although not always correctly. In Level 6, the main aim is for children to become more fluent readers and more accurate spellers. Level 6 teaches new spelling rules to help children become increasingly accurate in their writing.

The children are taught:

- Revisit alternative spellings for each phoneme with a focus on spelling rules and 'best bet' rules.
- Spelling rules when adding -ing, -ed, -est, -y to words.
- Adding suffixes -ing, -ed, -er, -est and -y to words.
- Adding suffixes -es to nouns and verbs ending in y.
- The suffixes -ment, -ness, -ful, -less and -ly.
- Letter strings: words ending in -tion, -le, -el, -al, -il.
- Letter strings: using 'or' or 'ar' after w.
- Apostrophes for contractions and possession.
- Homophones and near homophones for spelling.
- How to spell the following words as well as all the tricky words from previous levels.



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