

Sound It Out

A gentle phonics starter for early reading

Reading starts with sounds. When a child can say the sound each letter makes, then blend the sounds together, words they have never seen turn into words they can read. These sheets make sounding out a calm, playful, everyday habit.

The idea in one line

Say each sound, then blend the sounds together to read the word.

1 Say the sounds

touch each letter, say its sound

2 Blend them

slide them together, c-a-t

3 Read the word

cat! say the whole word

How to print, use and make it last

- Print at A4 or US Letter on normal colour settings - that's all you need.
- Laminate the word cards so a child can press the buttons again and again with a clean wipe between turns.
- Keep turns short and warm. Five sounded-out words today, five more tomorrow, beats a whole page at once.

Little and often beats long and rare. A few minutes of sounding out on most days does more than one long session now and then.

Lantern Path Books

From Lantern Path Books - a gentle classroom resource for sounding out words, not a reading programme or assessment.

The Sounding-Out Routine

Say each sound, then blend - I do, we do, you do

This is the heart of it. Model it first, do it together, then let the child try. A dot under a letter means a one-letter sound. Slide along the arrow to blend the sounds into a word.

Watch one word

cat



c ... a ... t then blend it: cat

1 I do

I touch each sound and say it: c ... a ... t. Then I slide my finger underneath and blend it into one word: cat.

2 We do

We sound it out together, slowly at first, then a little faster, then read the whole word out loud.

3 You do

Your turn. Touch each sound, blend them along the arrow, and read the word. I will wait, and then we cheer.

Press and Blend

One dot, one sound - press each one, then read the word

Print one for each child. Press each button and say its sound, then slide underneath and blend the whole word.
Every word here is fully sounded out, three sounds each. Mark them together when you are done.

cat

dog

pig

sun

hat

bed

top

map

net

bus

fox

jam

Two Letters, One Sound

Sometimes a team of letters makes a single sound

Some sounds are written with two letters working as a team. The button stretches into a dash to show the team is one sound. Here are the common teams, each with a word to sound out the same way.

sh

two letters, one sound

say it once, then blend the word ->

ship

ch

two letters, one sound

say it once, then blend the word ->

chip

th

two letters, one sound

say it once, then blend the word ->

bath

ng

two letters, one sound

say it once, then blend the word ->

ring

ck

two letters, one sound

say it once, then blend the word ->

sock

ll

two letters, one sound

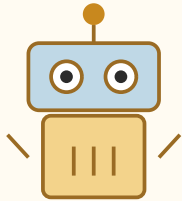
say it once, then blend the word ->

bell

Robot Talk

A playful way to practise blending, with a friendly robot

Blending the other way round. The grown-up is the robot: say a word in slow robot sounds, and the child blends it back into the whole word. Then swap, and let the child be the robot.



How to play

- 1 The grown-up robot says a word in sounds: d ... o ... g.
- 2 The child blends the sounds and says the whole word: dog!
- 3 Swap over. Now the child is the robot, and you blend it back.

Words to try: dog fish jump hand milk frog star nest

Words to learn by heart

A few common words are not fully sounded out yet. We learn these by heart, then come back and notice the one tricky part.

the

was

said

you

are

my

he

she

we

to

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Why Sounding Out Works

The research behind the kit, in plain words

Everything here is built on published research about how children learn to read. We make supportive classroom tools, not a programme or an assessment. The notes below are accurate statements about the research, not promises about any one child.

What the research says

- Decades of research point the same way: teaching children the sounds letters make, and how to blend them, is one of the most reliable ways to help early reading get started.
- National reviews in Australia and the UK recommend systematic, explicit phonics as part of how reading is taught (AERO; Rose, 2006; Rowe, 2005).
- The Education Endowment Foundation rates phonics teaching as high impact for very low cost, on average about five months' additional progress.
- Phonics works best alongside rich talk, stories and new words. The two together help reading take root, not one instead of the other.

If you have concerns

A general teaching resource, not a programme or an assessment. If you have concerns about a child's reading, speech or hearing, talk with the family and a qualified professional (a teacher, GP or speech-language professional).

The research behind it

Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO). Phonics and the science of reading (edresearch.edu.au).

Rose, J. (2006). Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading (UK).

Rowe, K. (2005). National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Australia).

Ehri, L. et al. (2001) and the National Reading Panel (2000). Systematic phonics instruction and children's reading.

Education Endowment Foundation. Phonics (Teaching and Learning Toolkit).

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