Sounds~Write A guide for parents of children in Year R

What can you do to help your child learn to read?

We will be introducing these sounds in the following order: Unit 1: a, i, m, s, t Unit 2: n, o, p Unit 3: b, c, g, h Unit 4: d, f, v, e Unit 5: k, l, r, u Unit 6: j, w, z Unit 7: x, y, ff, ll, ss. Every couple of weeks or so, we will begin a new unit and build the new sounds into what we have already introduced. We will always be talking about sounds not letters, and you can help most effectively by not using letter names, only sounds. If you are not sure which sounds we are teaching, simply refer to the key on the back of this leaflet.

What are we trying to teach?

We want the children to learn that letters are symbols for sounds, so that when they see the letters <m> <a> <t>, they say and hear /m/ /a/ /t/ 'mat'. To begin with, we shall be working only with two and three sound words. Your child needs to say the sounds and listen to hear what the word is. For this reason, sounds need to be said very precisely. For example, when we see the letter, we say /m/ and not 'muh'. Some sounds are much more difficult to say without adding a bit of an 'uh', but, with practice, it can be done.

Here is a link to a child saying the sounds precisely
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8ZMfYjdN-s

When your child has said all the sounds in a word and then read the word, you could ask them to write the word on a piece of paper or a small chalk board. Playing games with the sounds in words can be good fun and will help your child to understand that everyday words are made up of sounds and that we can pull these sounds in words apart: thus, 'cat' can be separated into /c/ /a/ /t/; and we can put these sounds back together again to form recognisable words: thus, /c/ /a/ /t/ gives us 'cat'. Names often make useful example to begin with: 'Jack' would be /j/ / a/ / k/ and 'Emily' would be /e/ / m/ /i/ /l/ /ee/. If you are not sure, just close your eyes and say the sounds in a word to yourself.

Key to alphabetic code knowledge:

Unit 1: a, i, m, s, t /**a**/ as in 'cat', /**i**/ as in 'pin', /**m**/ as in 'map', /**s**/ as in 'sip' and /**t**/ as in 'ten'

Unit 2: n, o, p /**n**/ as in 'not', /**o**/ as in 'pop', and /**p**/ as in 'pen'

Unit 3: b, c, g, h /**b**/ as in 'big', /**c**/ as in 'cup', /**g**/ as in 'get', and /**h**/ as in 'hen'

Unit 4: d, f, v, e /**d**/ as in 'dog', /**f**/ as in 'fun', /**v**/ as in 'vet', and /**e**/ as in 'leg'

Unit 5: k, l, r, u /**k**/ as in 'kit', /**l**/ as in 'leg', /**r**/ as in 'run', and /**u**/ as in 'bun'

Unit 6: j, w, z /**j**/ as in 'jug', /**w**/ as in 'wig', and /**z**/ as in 'zip'

Unit 7: x, y, ff, ll, ss The letter X represents two sounds /ks/ or /gz/ (depending on the word and/or the speaker's accent), so /ks/ as in 'fox'; / y/ as in 'yes'. The double consonants, <ff>, <ll> and <ss> represent the sounds /f/, as in 'sniff', /l/ as in 'fill', and /s/ as in 'miss'.

When you are reading a reading book with your child, do all the things you would normally do, such as talking about the story, discussing the characters, predicting what is going to happen next, and so on. But, whenever you come to a two or three sound word, which has in it the sounds your child has already come across, ask them to have a go by saying the sounds and listening for the word. If you do this, you will find that your child will quickly move on to more complex words, such as words with four and five sounds, such as 'lamp' and 'crisp'. After your child has mastered three-sound words, we will be moving on to words with four and five sounds and, again, you can best support you child by giving them as much practice as you can. If you have any questions about what you should be doing, or you meet any unexpected difficulties, please write in your reading record or contact me on the infant e-mail infants@stpeterseg.co.uk

Good luck and enjoy working with your child.

Miss Coster