

# Phonics information evening

# Phonics, what is it and how does it help my child?

Phonics, simply put, is a method for teaching reading and writing of the English language.

Why is it **important**? Phonics learning teaches children how to decode letters into their respective sounds, a skill that is **essential** for them to be able to read words by themselves. Keep in mind that most words are in fact unfamiliar to early readers in print, even if they have spoken knowledge of the word, know the alphabet etc.

Let's take a look at how it works:

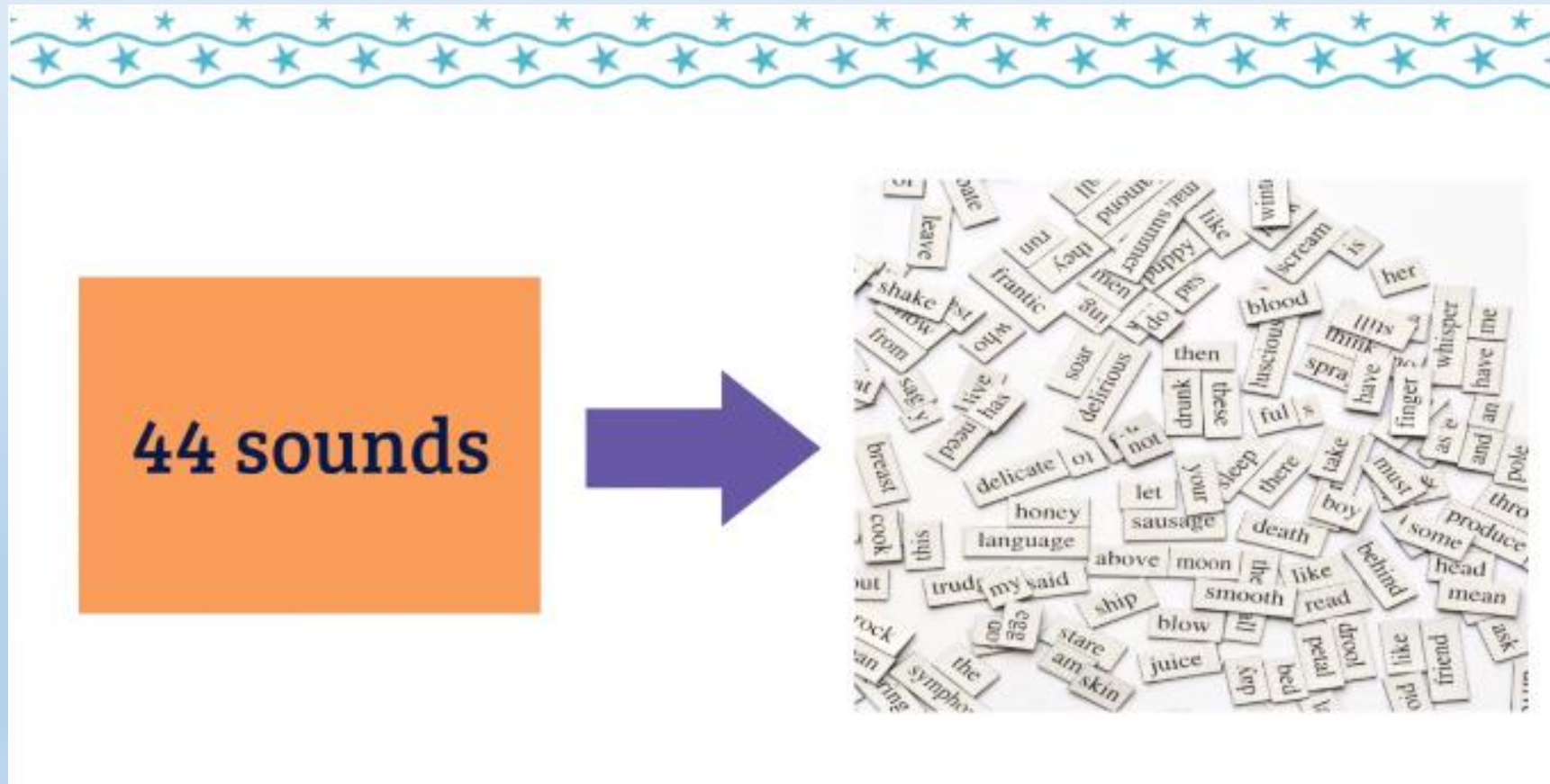


**All words are  
made up of  
sounds**

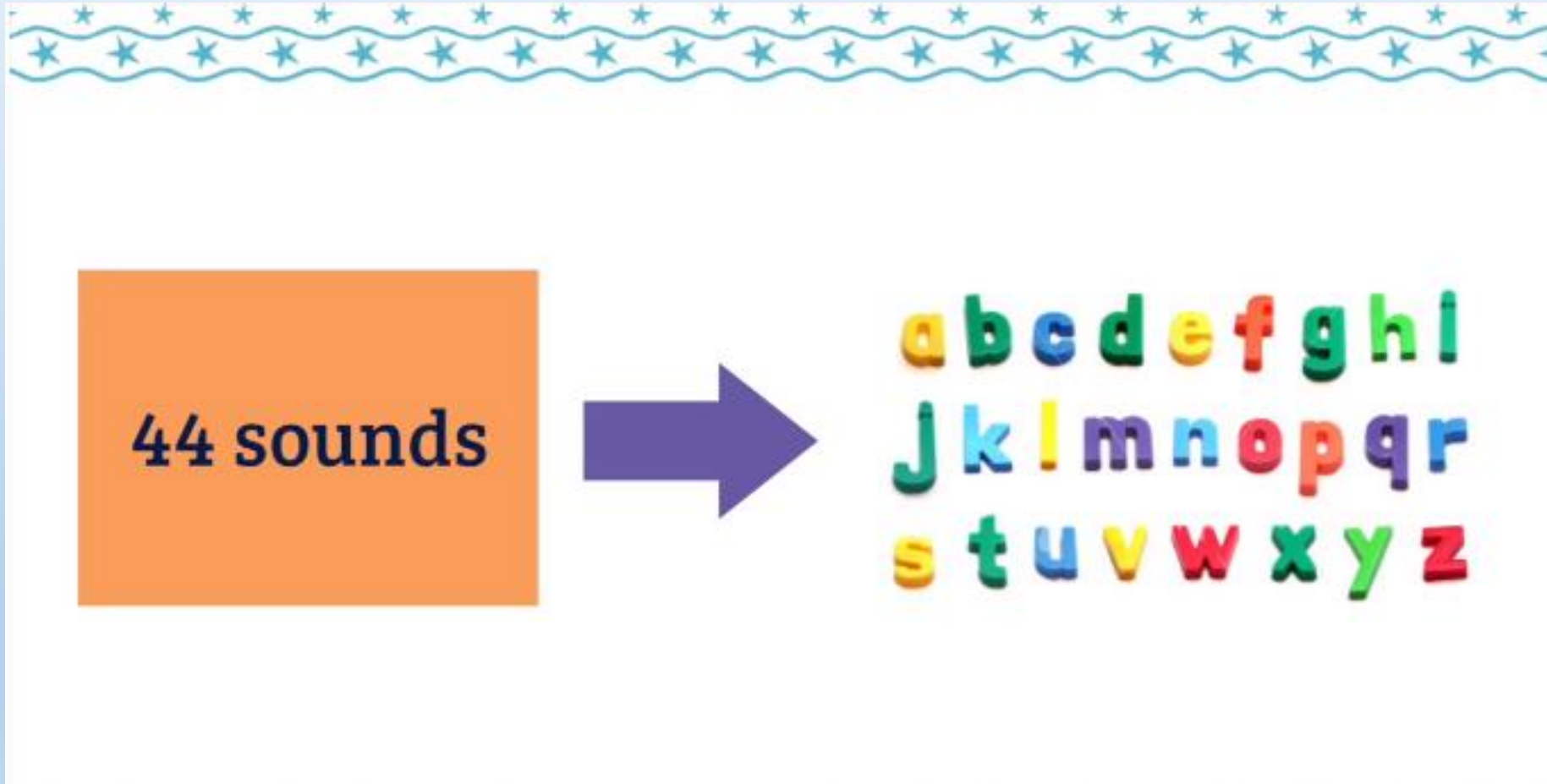


**cat  
ship  
light  
phonics**

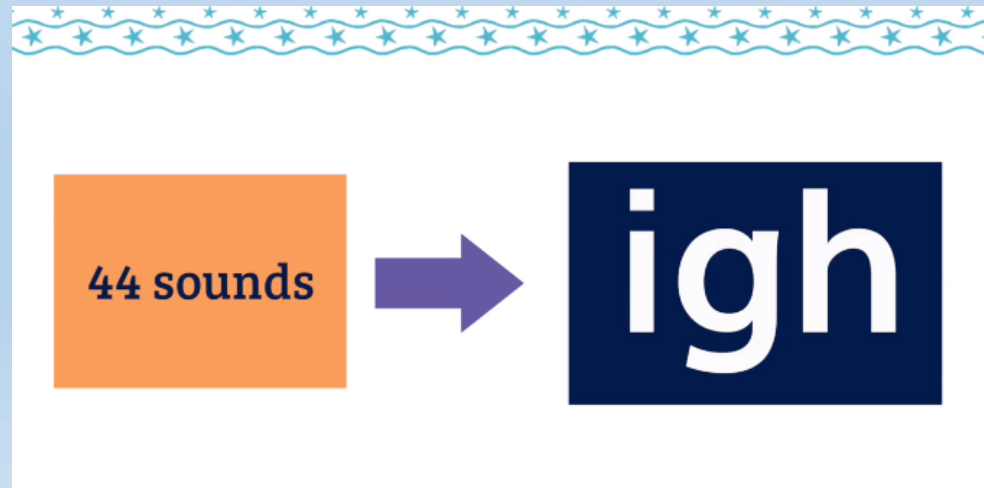
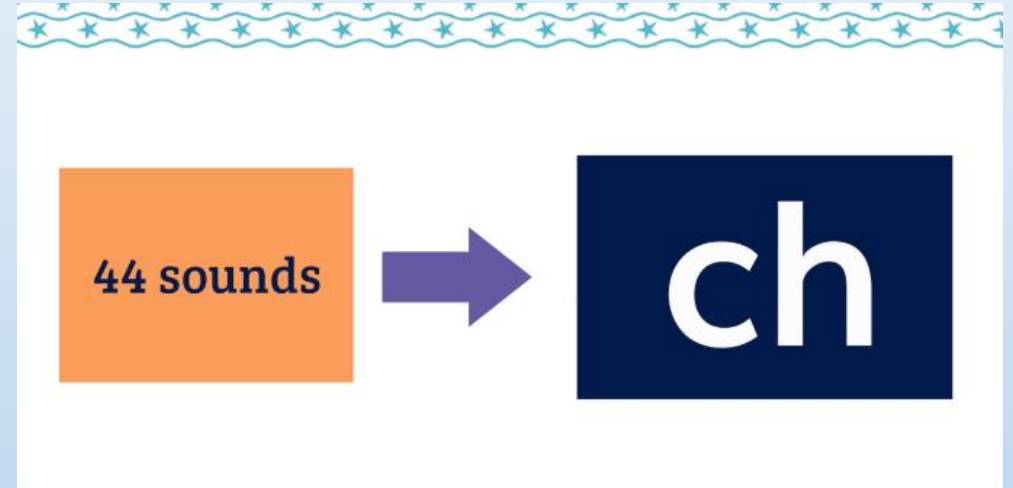
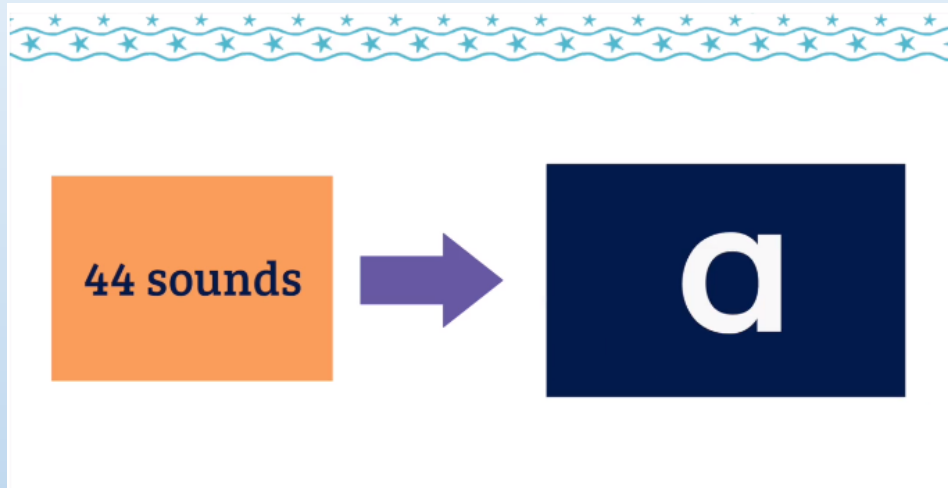
We use these 44 sounds to make all the words in the English language.



The 44 sounds are made up of single or a combination of, the 26 letters of the alphabet.



This means that the 26 letters work singularly,  
in pairs (digraphs) or in threes (trigraphs).



How many sounds are in each of these words?



**cat**  
**ship**  
**light**  
**phonics**



# To make things even more interesting, many of the 44 sounds are spelled in more than one way!

## Simple Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds – stretchy

f ff	l ll	m	n	r	s ss	v	z zz	sh	th	ng nk
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Consonant sounds – bouncy

b	c k ck	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
---	--------------	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	----

Vowel sounds – bouncy

a	e	i	o	u
---	---	---	---	---

Vowel sounds – stretchy

ai	ee	igh	oa
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Vowel sounds – stretchy

oo	oo	ar	or	ur er	ow	oi	ear	air	ure
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## Complex Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds

f ff ph	l ll le	m mm mb	n nn kn	r rr wr	s ss se c ce	v ve	z zz s se	sh ti ci	th	ng nk
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b bb	c k ck ch	d dd	g gg	h	j g ge dge	p pp	qu	t tt	w wh	x	y	ch tch
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Vowel sounds

a	e ea	i	o	u	ay ā-e ai	ee y ea e	igh ī-e ie i y	ow ō-e oa o
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oo ū-e ue ew	oo	ar	or oor ore aw au	air are	ir ur er	ou ow	oy oi	ire	ear	ure
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Consonant sounds											
f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng	
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk	
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci			
					c		se				
					ce						
b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh		ch
	ck				ge						tch
	ch				dge						
Vowel sounds											
a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow			
	ea				ā-e	y	i-e	ō-e			
					ai	ea	ie	oa			
						e	i	o			
							y				
oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure	
ū-e			oor	are	ur	ow	oi				
ue			ore		er						

sat  
dress  
horse  
circle  
piece

There are over 150 different ways to spell the 44 sounds.  
Not all of them are represented on this chart.  
We add them when we find new examples.

# What does reading and writing look like in the Reception?

We have daily phonics sessions where initially, we teach the children the sounds that are made by each letter and how to correctly form them when writing. As we progress, we will look at the digraphs and trigraphs.

There is a set order, which enables the children to begin **blending** to read and **segmenting** to spell, early on.

Each sound has a saying to go with it that encourages correct letter formation; for example **a** is 'around the apple and down the leaf'. We send home these sayings and formations to support the learning that takes place in class. Each child has also been given a small tub with sounds for the children to practice.



# Our daily sessions in Dexter class include:



- recap of previous sounds
- letter recognition and rhymes (grapheme formation)
- Fred talk (oral) Fred only talks and understands us when we segment the sound eg. c-a-t, h-u-ff
- sound buttons (blending)
- Fred fingers (segmenting)
- Recap of **tricky words**; these are words which children will learn to memorise whole so that they are able to read them instantly. They include high frequency words and common exception words (those which can not be sounded out in the usual way). These include words such as **a, I, and, the, he, she, no, to, said, was**
- hold a sentence- this means teaching children to remember a whole **sentence** in their head before they write it down with the correct punctuation and spelling. The **sentences** we ask the children to write include words that they have already been taught how to spell.

So what changes in Year 1?

- Actually, very little will change.
- Children will be separated into two broadly parallel groups.
- Phonics will continue to be taught for 30 minutes each day (usually first thing in the morning).
- Short assessments will continue each term to check which sounds are proving tricky so that prompt support can be given in plenty of time for the Year One Phonics Screen Check.
- Phonic work will continue to be recorded in dedicated books so that each child's phonic journey can be clearly seen.

# Phonics Screen Check

- Every Year 1 child in the country will be taking the phonics screening check in the same week in June (probably during the w/c 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – date not yet formally released).
- The aim of the check is to ensure that all children are able to read by the end of year two.

# What will the children be expected to do?

- The check is very similar to tasks the children already complete during phonics lessons.
- Children will be asked to 'sound out' a word and blend the sounds together.eg d-o-g - dog
- The focus of the check is to see which sounds the children know and therefore the children will be asked to read made up 'nonsense' words.
- THIS IS NOT A READING TEST





# What Will The Screen Check Look Like?

in

at

beg

sum

ot



vap



osk



ect



# Who will administer the check?

- The children will complete the check one at a time in a quiet area of the school.
- Either Miss Holden, Mrs Norris or Mrs Stevens will complete the check so that it is someone your child knows and is comfortable with.
- Each check will take only 5-10 minutes and the children will be familiar with the format (having carried out 2 or 3 'mock checks' in the weeks building up to the date.



# Pass Threshold

- The check will consist of 40 words (real and nonsense – we call them Alien words).
- In previous years, the threshold for the test has been 32 but this can change.
- We will not know the number of words required to meet the threshold until later in the academic year (usually the end of June).
- We will be able to show whether your child has reached the threshold, or is still working towards it, in the end of year report.

# What if the threshold is not met?

- By carrying out regular assessment we aim to have a clear idea of any child at risk of not reaching the threshold.
- Additional support will be given as soon as we identify a gap developing between the sounds taught and the sounds securely known by a child.
- If a child does not reach the threshold they will be able to take the check again in June 2020, whilst they are in Year 2 (extra support will be given to support them in this).

# How can I help?

Encourage your child to 'sound out' when reading or writing. Focus particularly on spotting more unusual sound patterns.

Eg.

- Digraph- 2 letters making one sound

cow

- Trigraphs- 3 letters making one sound

night

- Split digraphs- 2 vowels with a consonant between.

spi\_e

- Practise creating Alien Words for your child to practise

<http://www.oxfordphonicschecksupport.co.uk/> is a useful website for creating your own word lists. Initially just use 'new phase 5' sounds. Alien words are called pseudo words on here but helpfully include a cute alien picture which mimics the actual check.

*Although materials from previous screen checks can be found online, we use these at Amberley for mock assessments as they look like the checks the children will face. We would ask that you don't rehearse these with your child as it may create a false impression of your child's likelihood to reach the threshold.*



<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

Phonics Play is a fun website and provides some phonics games which are free (some you have to subscribe to). Picnic on Pluto is a particularly enjoyable game for the children to practise sounding for real and alien words. Again, select Phase 5 for words appropriate for your child.

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/PicnicOnPluto.html>

Buried Treasure is also fun.

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/BuriedTreasure2.html>



- **REMEMBER:** Phonics is not the only thing needed to become a fluent reader.
- Please continue to read with your child each night and encourage them to:
- Sound out & then blend to make the word.
- Re-read to check it makes sense.
- Use pictures for clues.
- Ask questions about the book.
- And most importantly **ENJOY READING!**

