

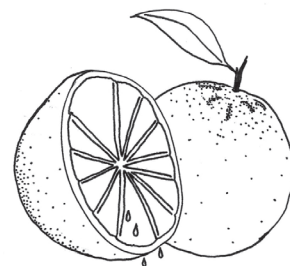
Literacy Skills For School Children



the **language tree**
creative speech, language & literacy clinic

A Welcome From . . .

Vicki Selwyn-Barnett



I'm thrilled you took the time to download my Literacy Skills For School Children eBook to help your child. The advice contained here has been developed & tested with successful outcomes over many years in my clinic. Have fun learning!

If you have any questions, or would like to book an appointment, please email: enquiries@thelanguagetree.com.au and we'll be in touch.



As a qualified speech & language pathologist, I have over 30 years experience and am the proprietor and founder of The Language Tree, speech, language & literacy clinic, based in Sydney, Australia.

I also established The Spellit Practice in May 2000 in London, (www.spellitpractice.co.uk). I'm a published author and specialise in treating children with literacy, language and articulation disorders.

I thoroughly enjoy working with children of all ages from pre-school to adolescence and provide a range of services in addition to direct 1:1 therapy.

Designed to empower parents to work actively with their children in a guided and rewarding manner, these extra services include: online courses for literacy skills, masterclasses, parent workshops & holiday intensives for interstate and overseas clients.

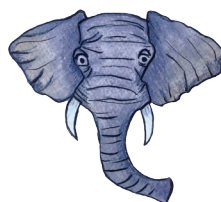
I've designed and developed the TLT System® over the last 20 years, including an adapted version for ESL students. I'm qualified in Integrated Listening Systems (iLS), The Spalding Method®, parent-child interaction & I'm a trained Defeat Autism Now (DAN) Practitioner.

For more information about my online, literacy course, please visit: **Literacy Read and Write**

Illustration credits

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Olivia Herrman, Anya Ow, Katie Webber & Wendy Coleman.

Table of Contents



Chapter 1

Understanding Literacy 3-6

What is Literacy? 4

Reading & Phonics 4

Reading & Sight Words 4

Blending 5

Facts & Figures 5

Handwriting Tips 6

Spelling Tips 6



Chapter 2

Checklists 7-10

Reading Behaviour Checklist 8

Writing Behaviour Checklist 9

Dyslexia Checklist 10

Auditory Processing Checklist 10

Vision Checklist 10

What if my Child is Struggling? 10



Chapter 3

Resources & Help 11-23

Practice & Daily Dose 12

Repetition & Rehearsal 12

The Language Tree Resources: 12-21

1. Worksheets
2. Online Program
3. Smiley Face Tracker

Other Literacy Resources: 22

Books & Games

Speech Pathology/Therapy Associations 23

Other Professionals 23



Chapter 4

Glossary of Terms 24-26

Auditory Discrimination 25

Blending 25

First Sound Awareness (Sound Identification) 25

Letter Formation 25

Onset & Rime 25

Phonemic Awareness 26

Phonics/Digraphs/Trigraphs/Grapheme-Phoneme 26

Vowels 26

Consonants 26

Tripod Grip 26

Phonological Awareness 26

Rhyme 26

Syllables 26



Chapter 1



Understanding Literacy



Literacy is essential for life-long learning, communication and employment. It is vital for children to have solid literacy skills in place in order to feel confident when tackling school work and to achieve success in learning and in life.

What is Literacy?

Literacy is made up of five main components: reading, writing, spelling, sentence and paragraph construction. Reading is a complex process that involves both strong phonic knowledge in order to blend sounds together and whole word recognition, as well as comprehension that is underpinned by vocabulary knowledge & strengthened by observing the punctuation code.

Prior to developing phonics, children should typically master the following pre-literacy skills:

- phonological awareness: rhyme, syllables, first sounds (see glossary for more details)
- phonemic awareness: an auditory process whereby a word is made of individual units of sound, dependent upon well developed phonological awareness skills (see glossary for more details)

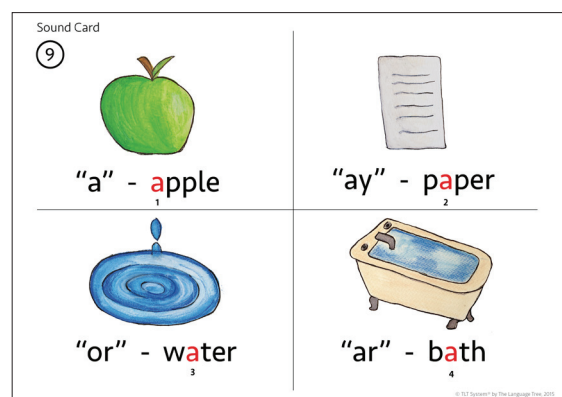
Phonemic awareness on entering school, is strongly related to a child's later success in learning to read.

Reading & Phonics (sound to letter correspondence)

Phonics involves both visual and auditory skills. Also known as letter (grapheme) to sound (phoneme) correspondence, it is based on the alphabetic principle. Children learn to read by blending phonic sounds together to make words (decoding/sounding out).

The grapheme-phoneme relationship suggests that:

- one letter can make several different sounds eg. /a/
- *The letter /a/ makes four main sounds: "a" in apple, "ay" in paper, "or" in water, 'ar" in bath.*



Sound Card No.9, Literacy Read & Write, online program, The Language Tree

Equally, the grapheme-phoneme relationship suggests:

- that several letters or letter combinations can make the same sound eg. /c/ cat; /k/ drink; /ck/ duck.



Sound Cards from Literacy Read & Write, online program, The Language Tree

Similarly, the grapheme-phoneme relationship depicts digraphs and trigraphs (two and three letter combinations) so that children can "chunk" these letters together, rather than reading them as separate sounds; /th, sh, kn, igh, oi, ay, dge/ etc.

In order to read fluently, your child must have fast, accurate and stable phonic skills/letter recognition. Remember, phonics is dependent upon well developed auditory pathways (phonological and phonemic skills)*

Reading & Sight Words (whole word recognition)

Once a child has a solid grasp of sounds within words (phonics), they no longer have to rely on "sounding out" (decoding) every word and blending, but instead their brain begins to see each word like a picture, not a group of letters to be processed individually. This is known as whole word reading and is closely related to the part of the brain responsible for facial recognition. At school, children are given sight words to learn that are based on high frequency words most commonly found in reading books. Children with reading difficulties can struggle to recall the sequence of letters in sight words and may often confuse similar looking words (eg. what / that, of / for), which can impact their reading comprehension (understanding).

* PLEASE NOTE If your child is unable to rhyme, segment words into syllables, cannot detect the first sounds in words, or struggles with phonemic awareness they may not be developmentally ready to read and would benefit from consolidating their pre-literacy skills (phonological awareness).

The Language Tree's YouTube channel

Literacy Fun-da-men-tools program



Blending

Once the child has a solid grasp of phonics (known as Sound Cards in TLT System) they can begin to blend letter sounds together to make words. This is the start of the reading process.

In order to read fluently, your child must have fast, accurate and stable phonic skills/letter recognition.

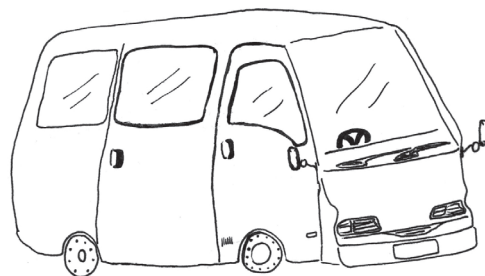
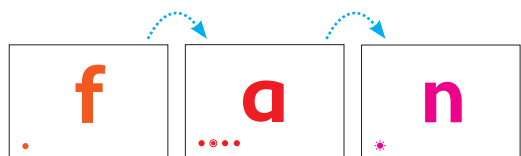
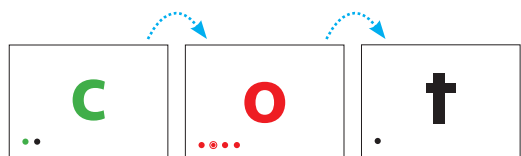
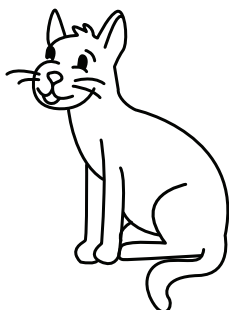
Below is an example of how we teach blending at The Language Tree using Sound Cards. If your child uses phonic cards at school, you can use these in the same way, by laying them out on the table in the following sequence.

Make sure you say each Sound Card as you lay them out and ask the child to repeat after you.

Then encourage the child to blend the sounds together to read each word.

Once the child successfully reads the word, (eg. cat) always put it in a sentence, eg. The cat has long whiskers.

In the clinic children enjoy colouring in the pictures which encourages fine motor practice.



Facts & Figures

There is plentiful research to suggest that if a child has a history of speech or language difficulties they are at much greater risk of developing literacy difficulties.

- Australia has one of the largest proportions of students who fall below the "intermediate" benchmark into the "low" or "below low" categories compared to other English speaking countries, including the US, Canada and the UK.
- 11% of 3 – 6 year olds in Australia have communication disorders.
- 10% to 15% of 5 – 6 year olds in the UK struggle to read and spell (there are approximately two to three children in every classroom experiencing ongoing learning difficulties).
- Findings from the recent Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) show that nearly 1 in 5 Australian children are not meeting international benchmarks for reading.
- Dunn (1991) & Griffith & Olson (1992), confirmed that a child's level of phonological awareness appears to be the strongest known predictor of later reading acquisition.



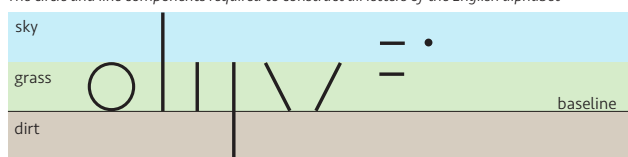
Handwriting

Handwriting is a complex fine motor process acquired through repetitive practice that should refine over time. The aim is to teach children how to form letters accurately and consistently. Eventually handwriting should be produced automatically at speed.

Handwriting components (Letter parts)

All letters are made up of circle and line components; either tall lines, short lines, angled lines, cross-bars or long lines that drop below the baseline.

The circle and line components required to construct all letters of the English alphabet



The letters of the English Alphabet

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

Initially, children must learn to write the 26 letters of the English alphabet, as single letters (vowels & consonants). These combined make two, three and four letter words (an, and, hand). Next they combine common digraphs (sh, ck, oo, etc.) to write more complex words (shop, duck, look) enabling their spelling to progress.

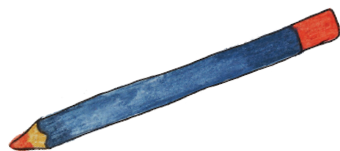
Handwriting, spelling and reading are intrinsically linked and strengthened by each other.

Tip No. 1 (Size Shape Direction)

To help children write letters of the correct size and proportion, it is useful to provide them with a three colour panel of sky, grass and dirt (as shown above). Spacing is important as letters should be close, but not touching.

Tip No. 2 (The 3 P's)

- Pencil grip
- Paper angle
- Posture



Encourage the child to hold their pencil with the mature tripod grip. The paper angle should be parallel to their writing arm. Encourage the child to adopt an upright posture while writing, rather than hunching over or tilting to one side.

Tip No. 3 (Helper Hand)

Encourage the child to hold their paper with their non-writing hand, to steady the paper. You can call this their "helper hand!"

Spelling

Spelling is an extremely complex literacy skill to master, because in English different letter combinations can make the same sound "sh": **shop**, **station**, **magician**, **mission**, **chef**. Therefore spelling relies on strong visual memory, accurate sequence and choice of phonic letter sounds plus knowledge of word origins (two, twins, twice).

Tip No. 1 (Say Beat Write)

Always say the word first that you want the child to spell and put it in a sentence.

- Say: Apple "I like to eat my crunchy apple."
- Beat: clap/beat out the number of syllables in synch with the word **ap ple**
- Write: write the word with the syllable break to show that every syllable must contain at least one vowel.

Say 

"Apple"

Beat 

ap ple

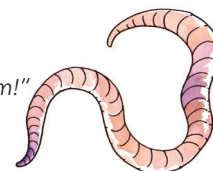
Write 

apple

Tip No. 2 (Spelling Rules)

There are at least 24 spelling rules, which once learned, allow a child to make logical spelling choices, rather than relying on guess work alone.

"I'm a **worm** not a werm!"



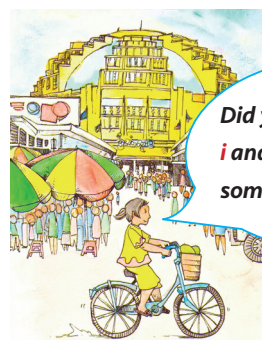
• The Weird W Rule

W is a weird letter because it can change the sounds of other letters.

- W can make **or** say **er**: work, world, worth, worm
- W can make **ar** say **or**: warm, award, warts, swarm
- W can make **a** say **o**: was, want, swan, wander

• The C to S Rule

The letter C says "s" before the vowels **e i y**
centre, city, cycle



Did you know that **i** and **y** are partners, so **y** is sometimes a vowel?

"I cycle to the city centre."

Chapter 2



Checklists



Reading Behaviour Checklist

Mark any of the developmental reading behaviours that your 4–5 year old child is beginning to achieve.

Once a child's phonological awareness skills (rhyme, syllables, first sounds) are in place, phonemic awareness develops next, then phonics alongside sight words. The ways to encourage reading listed below are helpful in developing good reading habits and a love of literacy.

Reading behaviours (Age 4–5 years)	Ways to encourage reading /Possible implications
Realises print contains a constant message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run your finger under the words whilst reading to show the child that print carries the story
Knows print goes Left to Right, Top to Bottom and may recognise some alphabet letters and can name them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sing an alphabet song with the child, arrange magnetic letters on the fridge, muddle some and see if the child can re-order them
Knows terminology such as letters, words, and sentences as discrete units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce terminology and repeat often
Beginning to see self as reader, talks about own reading	
May ask for favourite stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage child to draw a picture of their favourite character from the story
Joins in /acts out familiar stories if invited to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use props/toys to act out the characters in the story after you have read it, to embed the sequence and bring the story to life
Starting to demonstrate literary language "Once upon a time." "It was a dark, cold night."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use funny voices to indicate different characters and add emphasis & expression to highlight key elements of the text
Story subject matter identified "I want a story about a big cat"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out the word "big cat" every time it appears in the story and ask them to join in/try to spot the words to develop whole word recognition
Can connect ideas/events from story, retelling events in sequence using pictures, memory & story structure knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible memory, language or comprehension difficulties
Has personal view about a story character, and speculates on own behaviour "If I had been . . . I would have"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the child questions to generate a response and model your view on a character and what you would do as that character. This is lots of fun!
Sub vocalises/whispers when reading silently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set aside time to read every day and model this behaviour
Selects books to read for pleasure or self-selects texts on interest basis or familiarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If child has very limited and repetitive interests/book choices, this may indicate a social communication problem
Uses prior knowledge of context & personal experience to make meaning	
Uses memory of text to match spoken with written words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write out some common words from the story to see if they can match these items to words in the book (and, the etc.)
Demonstrates understanding of 1:1 correspondance between spoken & written words	
Follows along, finger pointing to each word as they begin to read or points to specific known words when reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible vision problems if they hold the book too close while reading
Asks for help with some words. May be aware reading is inaccurate, may seek help or stop reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-read with the child, so they feel fully supported and continue to the end of the book, so the story can be enjoyed
Uses language patterns to predict words or phrases	
Demonstrates some knowledge of letter-sound relationships - sound of initial/most salient letters in words/uses intial sounds to predict words in texts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possible literacy difficulties if poor retention of alphabet and letter sounds



Writing Behaviour Checklist

Mark any of the developmental writing behaviours that your 5–7 year old child is beginning to achieve.

This chart of writing behaviours includes elements of letter formation for handwriting, behaviours for forming words and writing sentences as well as early narrative techniques and some spelling tips. There are also pointers on when to see a specialist speech & language pathologist or an educational psychologist.

Writing behaviours (Age 5+ years)	Ways to encourage writing/Possible implications
Traces & copies letters with some success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the direction in which the child forms letters. Encourage anti-clockwise direction for: a, c, d, g, o, q, s, f. Encourage descending for: b, h, l, k, t, i, m, n, u, y, p, j. Encourage left to right for: e, z, v, w, x.
Reads back own writing to clarify meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity gives the child a sense of pride and independence and should be positively re-enforced
Voices thoughts while writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This helps the child to organise and plan their sentences and story in a cohesive manner
Attempts familiar forms of writing (lists, letters, recounts, stories, messages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out different types of text and explain their purpose
Writes to communicate messages, direct experiences or feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a fun activity make a card with the child for them to express their feelings towards a friend or family member
Assumes that reader shares the context so may not give sufficient background info (may tell who but not when)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the child to set the scene of their story and ask who (characters), when/where (setting), what (plot) etc. to teach the child the start of creative narrative structure
Often begins sentences with I or We	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage further narrative structure devices in first or third person: "They, Lucy, The boy, A dinosaur, Two kids" etc.
Writes using simplified language structures, often with incorrect spelling (I brt loles) I bought lollies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not feel the need to correct the child's spelling whilst they are writing as this can crush their confidence. Once they finish their writing, choose only a couple of words to correct and get them to practice the spelling
Is beginning to use written language structures - has a sense of a sentence (writes complete sentences with or without simple punctuation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the output is reduced or slow (takes a long time and they don't write much compared to their peers), consider assessment from a specialist speech and language pathologist or educational psychologist
Repeats familiar words (and, then, cat) or generates writing by repeating the same beginning patterns (I like cats, I like dogs...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the child's word choice by suggesting alternatives and create a simple word bank eg. suddenly, next
When writing, leaves a space between words as understands that words are separate units of meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the child to use their little finger as guide for space between each word they write
Uses upper & lower case letters indiscriminately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that uppercase (capital letters) are mostly used for names of people and at the beginning of each sentence
Distinguishes between numerals & letters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the child writes numerals or letters as reversals (back to front), beyond age 7 years, consider assessment from a speech & language pathologist or educational psychologist
Points to words while reading own writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use this natural behaviour to create awareness of whether or not the child has omitted words when writing
Relies heavily on the most obvious sounds of a word (eg. Hand: written as had, jumped: written as jupt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the example "hand" /n/ and /d/ are both made with the tongue tip. Equally in "jumped" /m/ and /p/ are both made with the lips. Over-emphasise the penultimate sounds to help the child hear it and write it for spelling



Dyslexia / Auditory Processing / Vision Checklists

Mark any of the areas that your 5–7 year old child finds challenging.

What if my child is struggling?

If you see a number of the following signs it may be time to arrange to see a specialist speech & language pathologist, an audiologist, a behavioural optometrist, an occupational therapist or an educational psychologist.

See lists of associations & professionals on page 23, for help and the link to our [Literacy Read & Write online program](#)

Dyslexia Checklist
Confusion of letters similar in shape: d / b, p / q, n / u, m / w, t / f
Confusion of letters similar in sound: v / f, th / f, u / a, i / e
Word reversals: saw - was
Transposals: left - felt
Omission or insertion of words
Repetition of words or phrases
Changing the sequence of words: she is - is she
Confusion of small words: of, for, from
Foreshortening longer words when reading: remember - rember
Fusing word boundaries: Once upon a time - Onsapona time
Bizarre spelling: under - und, look - goo, charge - juch
Mispronounces words: hospital - hopsertal, ferociously - forselly
Poorly formed letters
Immature pencil grip
Difficulty repeating multi-syllable words: zoo keeper - poo seeker
Confusion of spatial relationships: right & left, east & west, above & below
Delayed in learning to tell the time
Delayed in learning to speak
Difficulty in understanding time concepts: yesterday, tomorrow, next week, last year
Capital letters omitted or used incorrectly
Slow and laboured reading
Dislike or avoids reading and /or writing:
Difficulty understanding written text
Family history of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is currently referred to as:
Specific Learning Disorder, with impairment
in reading/written expression
(DSM-5 clinical criteria).

Auditory Processing Checklist
Difficulty discriminating between similar sounds in words: bread / red
Difficulty processing language and understanding directions
Difficulty remembering what was said
Mishearing words in songs
Difficulty staying focused on a speaker's voice and intended message
Confusion of multi-syllabic words: ambulance - ampidence, nocturnal - octurnal
Sound localisation is poor as they are unsure where the sound is coming from
Early history of ear infections/glue ear and difficulty with listening tasks
Struggles to manipulate or delete syllables from words: "say butterfly, now don't say fly." = butter
Difficulty in separating meaningful sounds and words from background noise
Inability to delete individual sounds from words with ease: "say meat, now don't say /m/." = eat
Speech can be poorly articulated, slow, hesitant or confused
Word retrieval difficulty: "I know the word, I just can't think of it."
Sometimes daydreams in class
Can't easily sequence the sounds in words when spelling: elephant - fellaton
Often needs words or sentences repeated
May stand back to see what others are doing before following verbal instruction
Difficulty completing homework tasks
Can be disruptive in class and struggle with independent work

Vision Checklist
Holding a book very close when reading
Holds head at an extreme angle when looking at a book to read
Covers one eye while reading
Squints when doing near work
Moves head rather than eyes back and forth while reading
Complains of words blurring when schoolwork gets harder
Loses place when copying from the board into exercise book as gaze shifts position
Re-reads or skips whole lines of text without realising
Omits words when reading, particularly small grammar words: in, on, if, the, a, but, then etc.
Rubs eyes after a short period of reading
Can get headaches, itchy or burning eyes
Reverses letters and words: b / d, p / q, saw / was,
When writing, words may be: unevenly spaced, disregard the baseline, irregularly shaped, inconsistently sized
Uses a ruler to help keep their place when reading
Misaligns digits in columns
Sometimes complain that words move on the page
Difficulty with reading comprehension
May not be able to picture imagery in their 'minds eye' (poor visualisation)

Chapter 3



Resources & Help



Powered by Speechies, trusted by parents, loved by kids!

These resources are well-loved activities from my clinic that are quick and easy to play whilst building a child's literacy skills in blending, reading, syllables, spelling and handwriting.

Practice & Daily Dose

Spending just five to ten minutes a day with your child, engaged in a one to one quality literacy activity, whilst keeping a specific purpose, goal or aim in mind, typically has a huge impact on each area of skill (blending, letter formation, reading, spelling).

Repetition & Rehearsal

To really develop deep learning and consolidation, children require repetition and rehearsal for any skill to be properly embedded (this is just like going to the gym to flex those metaphorical brain muscles!!) However, to avoid boredom, you'll need to constantly change the activities, games, books, pictures and words, while still maintaining the same literacy objectives. Don't worry, I know many parents are short of time, so I have done this for you!



The Language Tree Resources

1. Worksheets

Please use the resource worksheets on the following pages to help your child become more proficient with their five main literacy skills. Practice as many times as you wish and feel free to create your own versions or variations of the activities, while still maintaining the aims.

2. Online Program Literacy Read & Write

If your child is struggling with handwriting or not learning to read at the expected rate and you want a fully comprehensive, systematic, well sequenced program, with proven results, please take a look at: [Literacy Read & Write online program](#)

3. Smiley Face Tracker

In my clinic most children love using the **Smiley Face Tracker** so they can see their progress. I've included it here, so your child can have awareness of each specific literacy skill they are practising using a few of the worksheets from our Literacy Read & Write online program:

- blending
- syllables
- reading
- handwriting
- spelling

They also love negotiating with their parents as to the reward they will earn, once they've coloured in or put stickers on all the smiley faces at the completion of each practice session! Feel free to copy this sheet as many times as you like.

Other Literacy Resources

Books & Games

On page 22 there is a list of books and games that can help your child's literacy skills to develop in fun ways. Website links are included.



Resources from Literacy Read & Write

Blending: Word to Picture Match

Draw a line to match up the correct word with the correct picture. Colour in the pictures if you wish.

Adult > Help the child to recognise and blend the letter-sounds in order to read the words from the list below. If necessary say each letter-sound first. Ask the child to repeat after you. Put sounds together to read the words.

cap



cat



hand



fan



van



can



soft

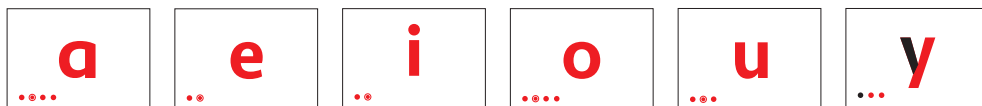

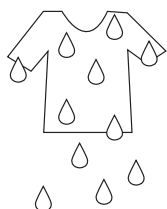
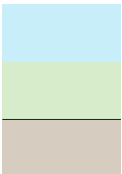
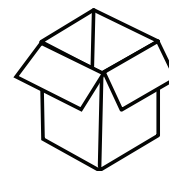
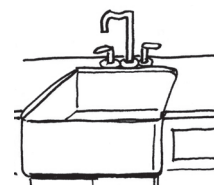
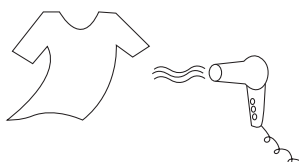
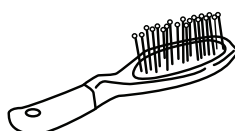


pants



**Resources from Literacy Read & Write**
Blending: Find a Vowel

Write the correct vowel from the Sound Cards below to complete each word. Colour in the pictures if you wish. English words don't usually end in /i/ so if you hear /i/ at the end of a word, remember to use /y/. This is because /y/ and /i/ are partners, eg. "dry".

w  ts  xb  xf  shh  nds  nkdr br  shd  g



Resources from Literacy Read & Write

Syllables: Clap the Beat

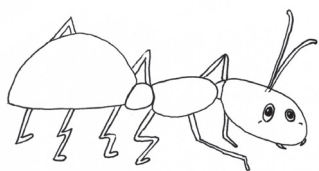
Words can be broken into syllables, which shows how many “beats” there are in a word. This helps our pronunciation of the word. **Every syllable must contain at least one vowel.** This also helps our spelling.

Adult > Practise clapping out the number of syllables in the words below with the child.
To reinforce this concept, indicate the syllable breaks by drawing vertical lines through the word.

Examples:



ant



zeb



ra



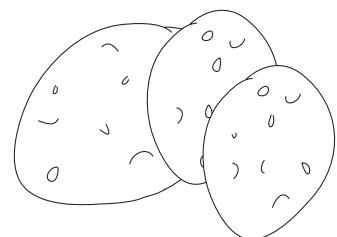
po



ta

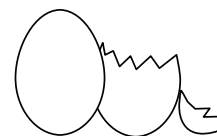


to

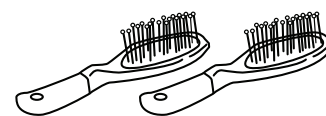


Now indicate Syllable Breaks with a vertical line:

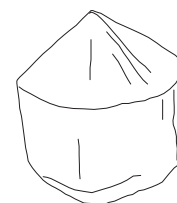
eggs



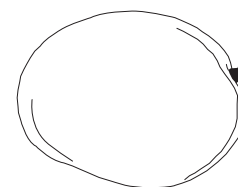
brushes



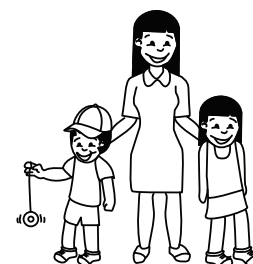
coconut



mango



children





Resources from Literacy Read & Write

Reading & Spelling: What am I?

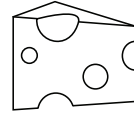
Support the child to read the clues and match their answer to the pictures shown, by drawing a line from the answer to the picture. They should write their answers on the dotted lines and can colour in the pictures too!

Example:

We do this every night after we clean our teeth.

Answer:

s l e e p



I have a shell and move slowly.

Answer:

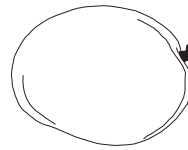
— = — — —



I wear a crown and live in a palace.

Answer:

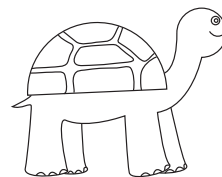
= = = —



A mouse loves to eat me.

Answer:

= = = — —



I am juicy, yellow and sweet.

Answer:

— — = — —



TIP: Use these two letter Sound Cards to help spell your answers:





Resources from Literacy Read & Write

Reading & Spelling: Guess the Animals

Support the child to read the clues in order to guess the animals, which are made up from the Sound Cards shown below. The child should write their answer on the dotted lines and can also draw the animal in the box.



Example:

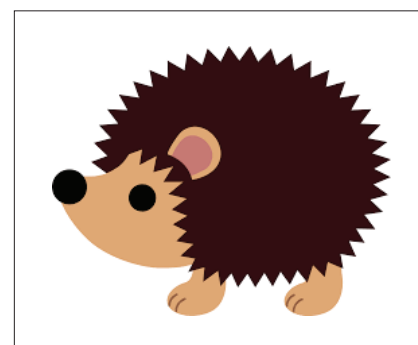
I have very sharp spikes.

I live in a hedge.

I curl into a ball when I get scared.

I am a:

h e d g e h o g



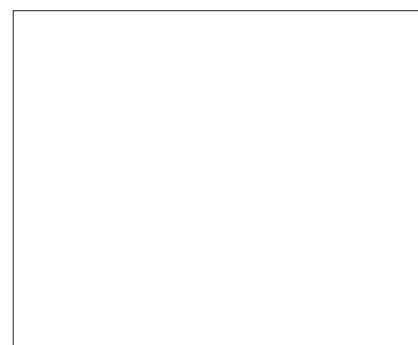
I have good eyes that see well in the dark.

I have a head that can turn to look behind me.

I have feathers and wings.

I am an:

— — —



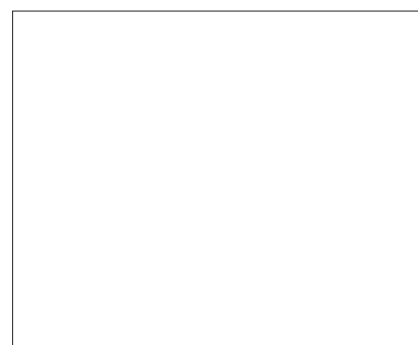
I have a small head and short front arms.

I hop on my powerful legs.

I carry a baby in my pouch.

I am a:

— — — — —



**CHAPTER 3**
RESOURCES & HELP**Resources from Literacy Read & Write**
Spelling: Final Silent /e/

Let's practise reading these similar pairs of words. Notice the difference between the 1st and the 2nd vowel sounds. The silent /e/ changes the short (1st) sound of the previous vowel into its long (2nd) vowel sound.

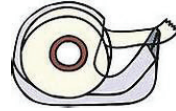
Adult > Encourage the child to write the appropriate number under each **vowel** to show which sound it makes.

Example:

tap
1



tape
2

**Short (1st) vowel sound**

hop

cut

mad

tub

rip

not

slid

Long (2nd) vowel sound

hope

cute

made

tube

ripe

note

slide





CHAPTER 3
RESOURCES & HELP

Resources from Literacy Read & Write
Handwriting: Blank Sky Grass Dirt

LITERACY Read & Write

WORKSHEET:
Session: as appropriate
SOUND CARDS: 1 – 68

Blank Sky, Grass, Dirt

Activity 2. Letter Formation

sky

grass

dirt

baseline

sky

grass

dirt

baseline

sky

grass

dirt

baseline

sky

grass

dirt

baseline



Resources from Literacy Read & Write

Handwriting: Sample Page Writing the Letter /g/

In our Literacy Read & Write online program, we provide full instructions to help parents assist the direction and letter formation of their child's handwriting. We use a strong scaffold that drops away as the child becomes more proficient, as shown below.

LITERACY Read & Write

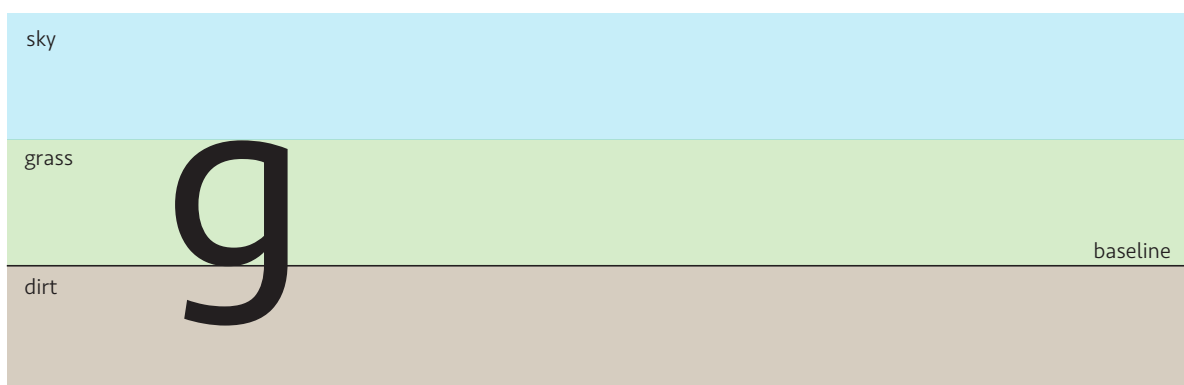
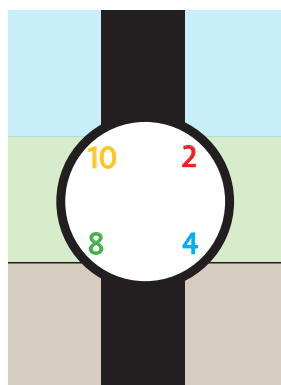
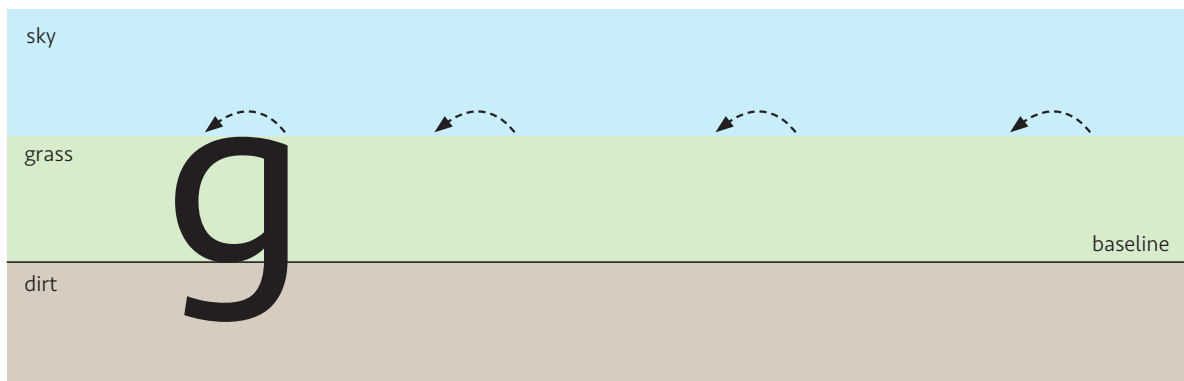
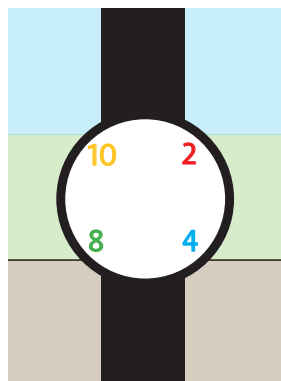
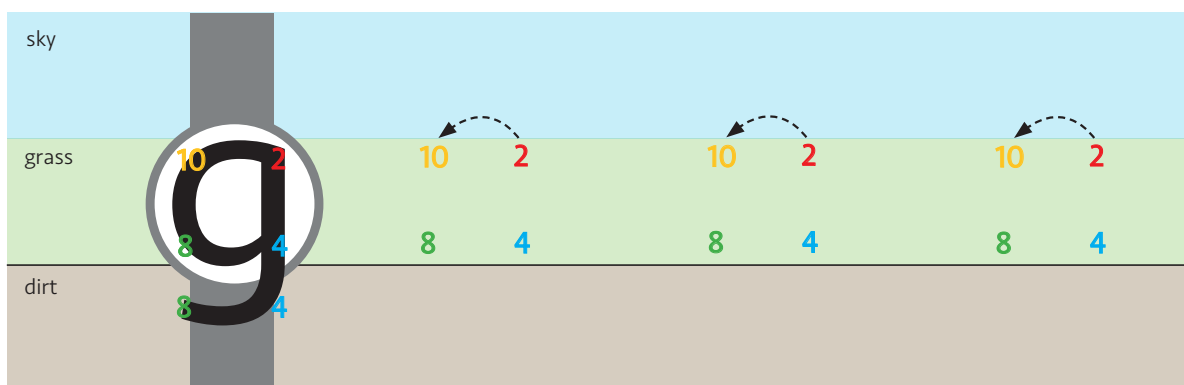
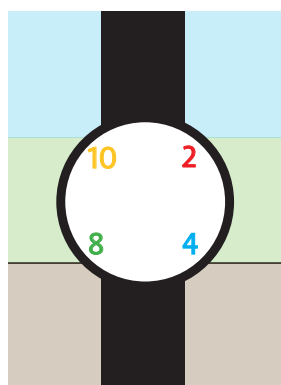
WORKSHEET:
Session: 1
SOUND CARD: 6



Writing Sound Cards 1 – 10

Watch-face grass letter /g/

Activity 2. Letter Formation





Smiley Face Tracker

You can use this sheet in conjunction with the worksheets provided or make up your own activities to focus on each area of skill listed below.

Blending refers to putting sounds together to read words and reading refers to reading books.

Focus on one skill area a day (blending one day, syllables the next etc.) and practice this for 5 minutes.

Use this sheet with your child to track their progress and reward them with a prize once they fill up all the smiley faces on the chart.

Blending							
Syllables							
Reading							
Handwriting							
Spelling							



CHAPTER 3

RESOURCES & HELP

Other Literacy Resources

Books & Games

Here are some of our favourite reading resources that we use in the clinic, as they align well with the Sound Cards.

Books

Bird Chief Stew

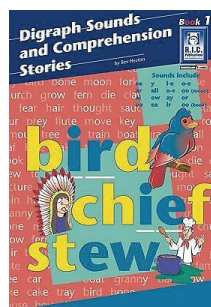
(Digraph Sounds and Comprehension Stories)

Bev Heaton

Prim-Ed Publishing

ISBN: 9781864000580

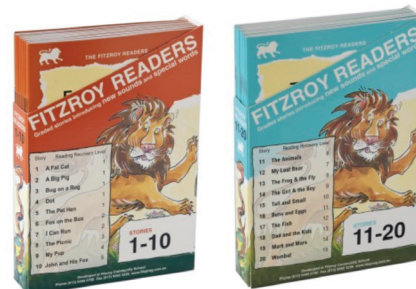
[ebay link](#)



Fitzroy Readers

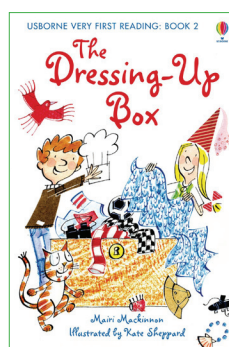
Fitzroy Programs Pty. Ltd

www.fitzprog.com.au



Usborne Very First Reading Books

www.usborne.com



Games

Smart Kids

Various games and resources

(Chunk Stacker, board games, smart chute cards)

www.smartkids.com.au



Beat the Tiger

Board Game

Modern Teaching Aides

www.teaching.com.au



Zingo Sight Words

[amazon link](#)



Pop for Sight Words

[amazon link](#)



Magnetic Alphabet Board

[amazon link](#)





If you are at all concerned about your child's literacy development, these speech pathology associations should be able to provide you with guidance. Other professionals who may be of help are also listed on the right hand side below.

Speech Pathology/Therapy Associations

Australia

SPA

(Speech Pathology Australia)

speechpathologyaustralia.org.au

Canada

SAC

(Speech-Language & Audiology Canada)

sac-oac.ca

South Africa

SASLHA

(South African Speech-Language-Hearing Association)

saslha.co.za

UK

RCSLT

(Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists)

rcslt.org

USA

ASHA (American Speech-Hearing Association)

asha.org

Other Professionals

This is a fairly typical list of common professionals that are often involved in children's care. It may be a useful starting point if you have any concerns regarding the words listed in brackets, below each professional.

These professionals may form part of your child's investigative team, and/or multidisciplinary team:

- **Audiologist**
(hearing, auditory processing)
- **Clinical Psychologist**
(behaviour, anxiety)
- **Educational Psychologist**
(school-age children, cognitive and learning profiles)
- **Occupational Therapist**
(fine and gross motor skills, sensory integration)
- **Optometrist**
(vision, eye health, eye behaviours, tracking when reads)
- **Paediatrician**
(development & medical diagnosis)
- **Physiotherapist**
(muscle tone, delayed motor skills)



Chapter 4



Glossary of Terms



CHAPTER 4

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

There are lots of similar terms used when describing literacy skills: phonological, phonemic, phonetic, phonics. Hopefully the list below will help clear up any confusion!

Auditory Discrimination

This is the ability to listen to and decipher words that sound similar or have competing qualities. This is reliant upon accurate hearing and pronunciation and is essential for understanding and storing words correctly.

For example: sliver and slither (the /v/ and /th/ sound very similar but create completely different meanings).

Children with auditory processing difficulties or hearing loss can find this task difficult.

Blending

This is the ability to combine individual letter-sounds (phonemic awareness) in the correct sequence, in order to make words. This is reliant upon accurate pronunciation as well as strong auditory memory.

For example: p - ar - k = park.

This is essential for accurate spelling and also represents how sounds and letters operate in print. The simplest form of blending starts with your child putting together the initial sound (onset) and remainder of a word (rime).

For example: p - ark = park

First Sound Awareness (Sound Identification)

First sound awareness is the ability to detect and isolate the initial sound in a word. Sound identification applies to detecting the initial, middle or final sounds in words.

For example: cap starts with /c/ ends with /p/ and has the short vowel sound /a/ in the middle, whereas cape starts with /c/ ends with /p/ and has the long vowel sound /a/ in the middle.

First sound awareness can be reinforced by playing games like "I spy with my little eye, something beginning with . . ."

Letter Formation

The 26 letters in the English alphabet are made up of circles and lines. Many have similar components, requiring the same fine motor patterns. Anti-clockwise formation of circle letters, requires crossing the mid-line and is often the most difficult skill to master. It needs lots of practice and provides the building blocks for circle letter shapes, enabling your child to write the letters /a, c, d, f, g, o, q, s/.

In our detailed, online program*, in addition to circle letters we cover all letter formation possibilities for lower case print writing. (***Literacy Read & Write**)

Onset & Rime

This is the simplest form of blending. Onset refers to the initial sound and rime refers to the remainder of a word.

For example: b (onset) oot (rime) = boot.





CHAPTER 4

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Phonemic Awareness

This is the understanding that words are made from smaller units of sound, known as phonemes.

For example: cat is made of three distinct sounds, /c/ /a/ /t/, as is shark /sh/ /ar/ /k/.

This develops before letter recognition (phonics/grapheme-phoneme relationship) and is an important pre-literacy skill to master.

Phonics/Digraphs/Trigraphs Grapheme-Phoneme

Phonics is based on the phonetic alphabet principle and is the *letter/grapheme to sound/phoneme* relationship which suggests that a particular letter shape can make a sound or sounds.

For example: the letter /a/ makes six different sounds in: apple, apricot, water, bath, many, swan.

The letter /b/ only makes one sound in: bath, rub, boat.

Digraphs are when two letters are chunked together to make one sound.

For example: toothbrush /oo/ /th/ /sh/



Trigraphs are when three letters are chunked together to make one sound.

For example: /igh/ light, /dge/ bridge, /ear/ learn

In order to read fluently, your child must have fast, accurate and stable phonic skills/letter recognition for single sounds, digraphs and trigraphs.

Vowels

In English there are five vowels (a, e, i, o, u) and a semi-vowel (y) which is used in place of /i/ in some instances.

Consonants

In English the letters that are not vowels are called consonants.

Tripod Grip

This refers to a mature pencil grip, whereby the thumb, forefinger and middle finger are arranged in a tripod shape to grip the pencil for most efficient and comfortable writing.

Phonological Awareness

This term refers to understanding the structure of spoken words, and uses auditory skills. It consists of: rhyming qualities of a word, syllable structures within a word, individual units of sound allowing for first sound identification and blending. A child's level of phonological awareness in kindergarten is one of the strongest predictors of future reading success. Phonological awareness is also known as pre-literacy skills or as early literacy skills or phonological skills.

Rhyme

This is when two words sound the same with the exception of the first consonant(s).

For example: try / dry, car / star, hair / bear.

Research shows that rhyming skills by aged 3½ is a particularly sensitive measure of later reading acquisition, as it forms one important component of a child's phonological awareness skills. Children should be able to listen and identify rhyming words (input) and also generate rhyming strings (output) at pre-school age.

Syllables

These are the number of beats in a word. Each syllable is characterised by one unit of sound, with or without surrounding consonants. Every syllable typically contains at least one vowel, but syllables often have more than one vowel.

For example: frog = one syllable, ap-ple = two syllables, e-le-phant = three syllables.

Research shows that a child's ability to segment words into their syllable parts by aged 3½ gives them a head start when they come to school, as they can make sense of the length and structure of words.

