

Glossary of terms

adjacent consonants: Two or three letters with discrete sounds which are blended together: **sm, bl, cr, spl**.

alliteration: a phrase containing words beginning with the same initial sound: **C**lever **C**at **c**ollects **c**oins;
Munching **M**ike loves to **m**unch **m**ushrooms in the **m**eadow.

base word: a word minus any prefix or suffix -added to it: **unconcerned, kindness, goats, snowing**.

blending: the process of sounding out each individual phoneme in a word and then blending them together to read the word. For example, /c/ /ă/ /t/ blended together is **cat**.

compound word: a word which consists of two words put together with each retaining its meaning: **playground, roundabout, notebook**.

comprehension: understanding the text being read.

consonant: all alphabet letters except the vowels **a, e, i, o, u**.

contraction: a word that combines two words with one or more sounds left out: **I'm, wasn't, we've**. An apostrophe is placed where one or more letters are left out.

decoding: the process of going from printed or written words to verbal language whether reading aloud or silently.

digraph: two letters representing one phoneme: **thin, luck, shop, grow, treat, cloud**.

grapheme: a written representation of a single phoneme; may consist of one or more letters. For example the phoneme /s/ can be represented by the graphemes shown: **sun, mouse, cell, city, science**.

letter name: the name commonly used when referring to letter shapes: **aye, bee, cee, dee, ee, eff, gee**.

letter shape: the form of the letter.

letter sound: the speech sound represented by a letter, often represented in print between back slashes: /t/ for the letter **t**.

multisensory: the simultaneous use of visual, auditory and kinesthetic senses (VAK) to enhance learning.

phoneme: the smallest identifiable unit of sound in a word. A phoneme can be represented by one, two, three or four letters. The following words end in the same phoneme: **to, shoe, through**.

phonemic awareness: the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. A child shows phonemic awareness when they can separate the phonemes in a word (**map, /m/ /ă/ /p/**).

phonics: the teaching of the relationship between sounds and spellings (phonemes and graphemes).

pictogram: a picture embedded in a letter or digraph that helps children remember the shapes and sounds even when they see only the plain letters.

prefix: a part added at the beginning of a base word that changes the meaning: **unseen, rewrite, disappear, preview**.

schwa: an unstressed vowel phoneme. Any vowel can be pronounced as a schwa if the syllable is not stressed: **man** → work**man**.

segmenting: the process of splitting up a spoken word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it: **cat /c/ /ă/ /t/ → cat**.

slow speak: a term used to describe stretching out a word by saying it slowly enough to identify each sound to aid spelling: **run, rrrrrruuuuuunnnn**.

split digraph: two letters, split, making one sound, For example, **a_e** as in **make**.

suffix: a part added to the end of a word that may change its tense, number, meaning, part of speech, or use in a sentence: **reached, wishing, bells, careless, kindness, thinks**.

syllable: each 'beat' in a word is a syllable. Words with only one syllable (**cat, fright**) are called monosyllabic; words with more than one syllable (**super, superman**) are polysyllabic.

Tricky Words: Frequently used words that cannot be decoded easily. They often have one or more unusual spelling patterns: **was, said, what, they, of**. Also called common exception words, sight words, irregular high-frequency words.

trigraph: three letters representing one phoneme: **high**.

vowel: the five vowel letters, **a, e, i, o, u**. They can represent short or long sounds (**cat, cake**). The letter **y** can also represent vowel sounds (**fly, very, bicycle**).