

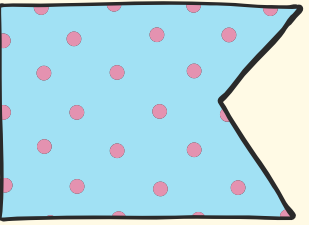
Sounds-Write and Early Reading

16th September 2026



Sounds-Write

Sounds Write is a linguistic phonics programme – based on speech (think sounds first) and is based on whole words



Very structured

Different to how we have previously taught phonics

30 minutes every day (in KS1) with about 3 different activities within that 1 lesson (including either reading or dictation)

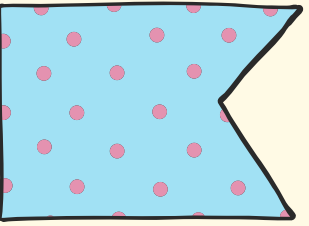


Sounds-Write 3 key skills

blending

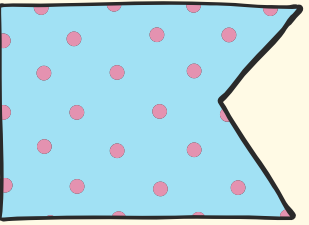
segmenting

phoneme manipulation



Sounds-Write conceptual knowledge

letters are symbols (spellings) that represent
sounds

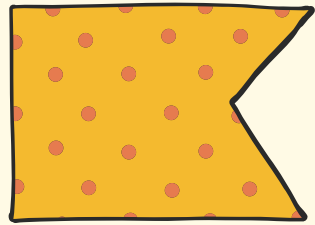


a sound may be spelled by 1,2,3, or 4 letters
the same sound can be spelled in more than
one way

many spellings can represent more than one
sound

letters represent sounds not make sounds

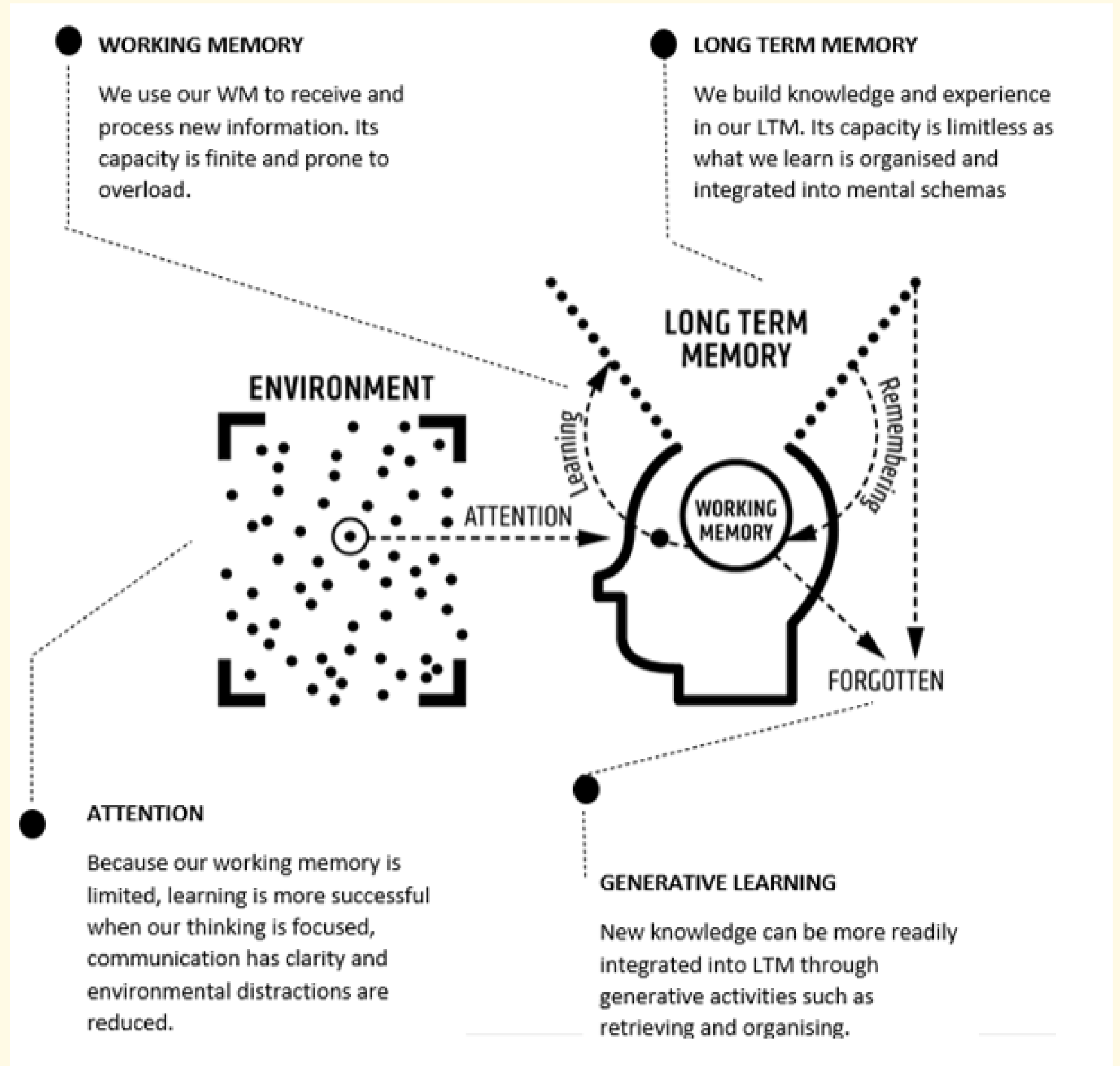




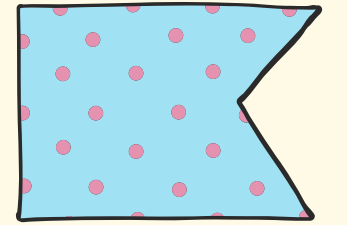
A simple model for how memory works is based on the concept of building schemata in our long-term memory.

Schema is a mental structure to help us understand how things work. It has to do with how we organize knowledge.

As we take in new information, we connect it to other things we know, believe, or have experienced.



3 parts Sounds-Write lessons



1. review prior learning (previous unit)
2. new learning (current unit)
3. retrieval - reading and writing in connected text



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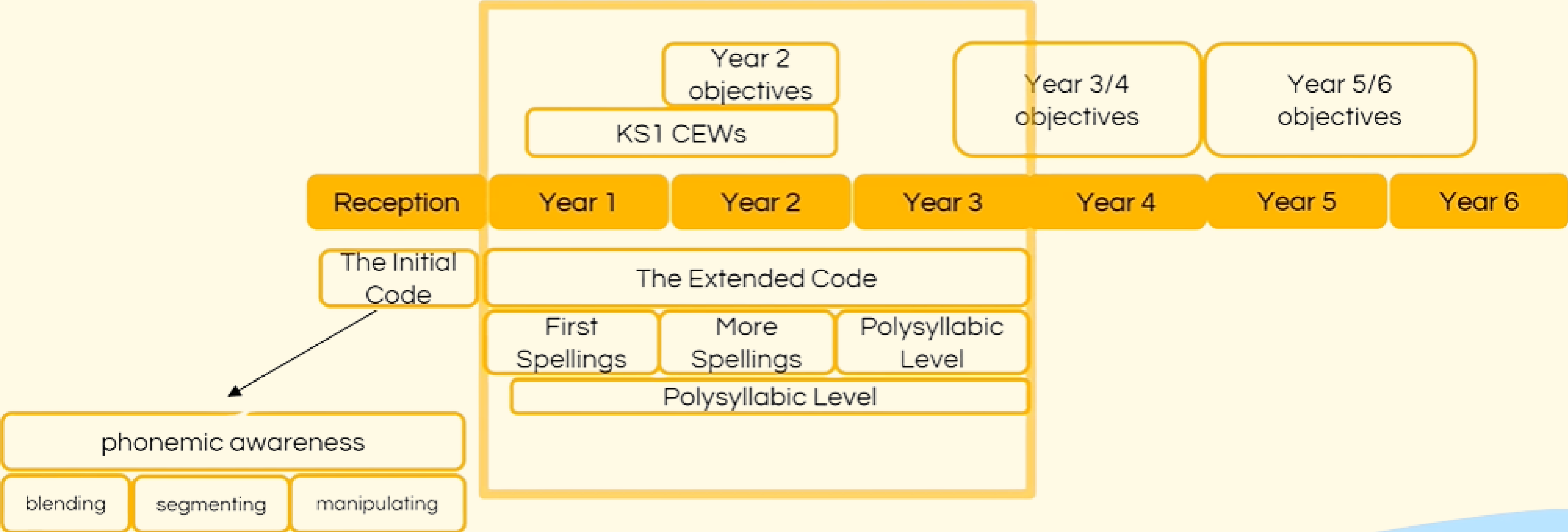




Whole School Implementation (UK)

Sounds-Write

The Extended Code



Learning objectives: The Initial Code

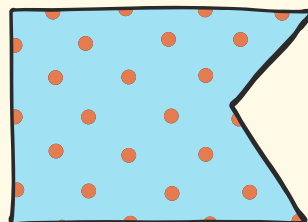
The Sounds~Write programme is cumulative. The chart below shows the new learning objectives introduced at each Unit. However, all the previously encountered objectives also continue.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: THE INITIAL CODE			
UNIT	SKILLS	CODE	KNOWLEDGE CONCEPTUAL
	To segment, blend & manipulate sounds in words with the structure:		
1	CVC	a, i, m, s, t	Sounds can be represented by spellings with one letter
2		n, o, p	}
3		b, c, g, h	
4		d, e, f, v	
5		k, l, r, u	
6		j, w, z	
7	2 sounds Ks & 1 letter	x, y, ff*, ll*, ss*zz*	Some spellings are written with a double consonant are CVC words as sh = 1 sound
8	vcc and cvcc 2 consonants in final position 3- & 4-sound words	No new code knowledge	}
9	CCVC 2 consonants in initial position	No new code knowledge	
10	ccvcc, cvccc, and cccvc 3 adjacent consonants 5-sound words	No new code knowledge	
11	teach tch as well	sh*, ch*, th*, ck*, wh*, ng*, < q > < u >*	Some spellings are written with two different letters < q > and < u > represent the sounds /k/ and /w/

EYFS

- starts with the Initial Code
- everybody is part of the daily lesson
- starts with word building by saying the whole word
- much bigger focus on segmenting, blending and phoneme manipulation skills so that this is solid before moving onto 2 letters representing 1 sound (digraphs)

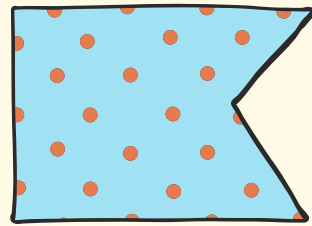
Year 1



target sound.		Spellings:	
Sounds:		Teach with Lesson 10	
Teach with Lessons 6, 7, 8 and 9			
Unit		Unit	
1	Sound /ae/ first spellings		
2	Sound /ee/ first spellings		
		3	Spelling < ea >
4	Sound /oe/ first spellings	5	Spelling < o >
6	Sound /er/ first spellings		
7	Sound /e/		
8	Sound /ow/	9	Spelling < ow >
10	Sound /oo/ (as in 'moo_n') first spellings		
11	Sound /ie/		
12	Sound /oo/ (as in 'book')	13	Spelling < oo >
14	Sound /u/	15	Spelling < ou >
16	Sound /s/	17	Spelling < s >
18	Sound /l/		
19	Sound /or/ first spellings		
20	Sound /air/		
21	Sound /ue/	22	Spelling < ew >
23	Sound /oy/		
24	Sound /ar/		
25	Sound /o/	26	Spelling < a >

starts with Extended Code
same sound, 4 different ways to spell that sound (including split spellings)
one spelling, different sounds <ea>
polysyllabic words

Year 2



		26	Spelling < a >
27	Sound /ae/ more spellings		
28	Sound /d/		
29	Sound /ee/ more spellings		
30	Sound /i/		
		31	Spelling < y >
32	Sound /oe/ more spellings		
33	Sound /n/		
34	Sound /er/ more spellings		
35	Sound /v/		
36	Sound /oo/ (as in 'moon') more spellings		
37	Sound /j/		
38	Sound /g/		
		39	Spellings < g >
40	Sound /f/		
		41	Spelling < gh >
42	Sound /m/		
43	Sound /or/ more spellings		
44	Sound /h/		
45	Sound /k/		
46	Sound /r/		
47	Sound /t/		
48	Sound /z/		
49	Sound /eer/		
50	Sound schwa /ə/		

still Extended Code – revisit with more spellings
same sound, different ways to spell that sound (including split spellings)

Year 1 /ae/ <ai> <ay> <ea> <a-e>

Year 2 /ae/ Year 1 plus <a> <ei> <ey> <eigh>

one spelling, different sounds <ea>

polysyllabic words

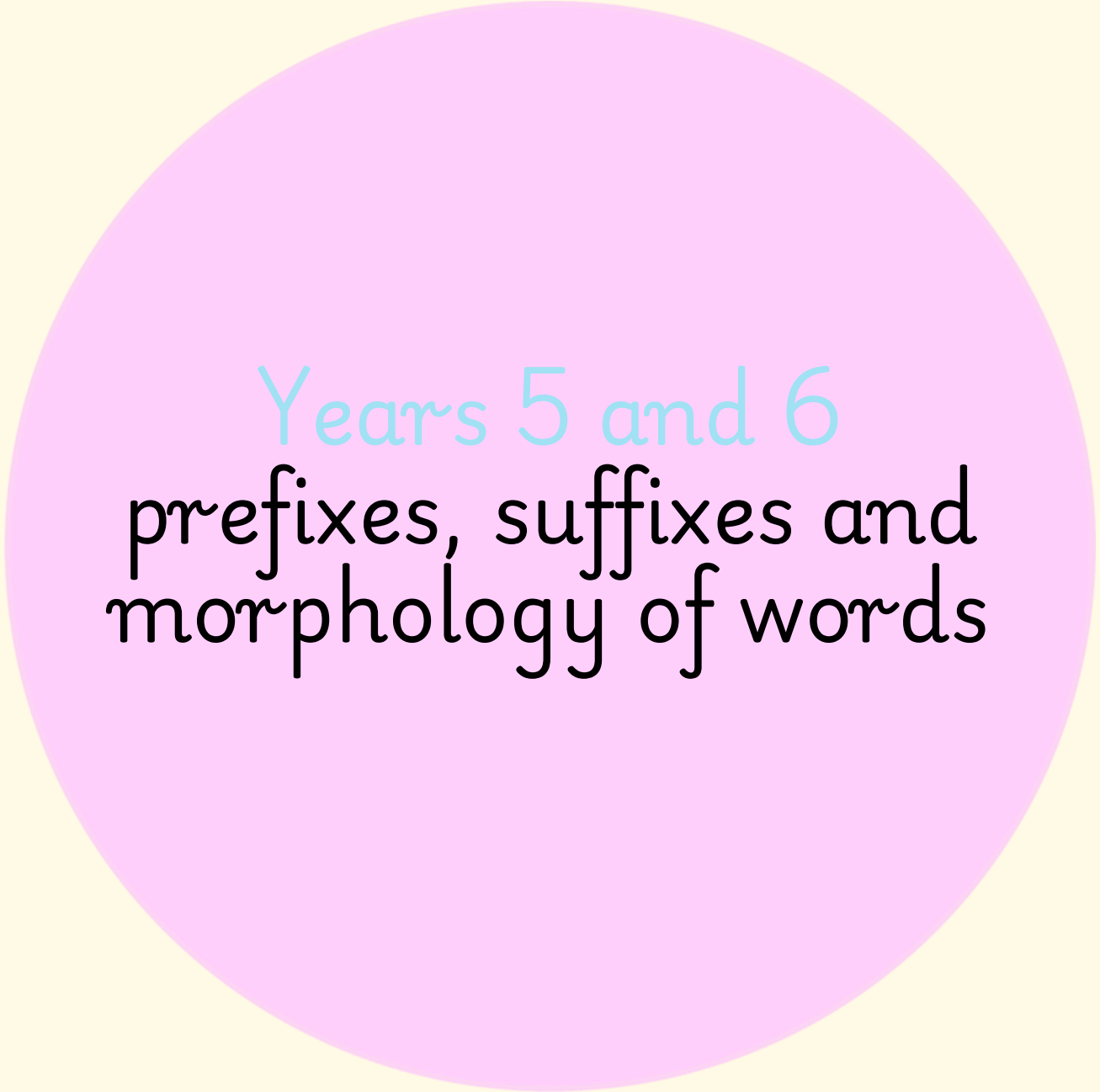
Years 3 to 6 (moves from phonics to spelling focus from Year 4)

revisit Extended Code at a polysyllabic level (estimated that more than 80% of the words in the English language are polysyllabic).

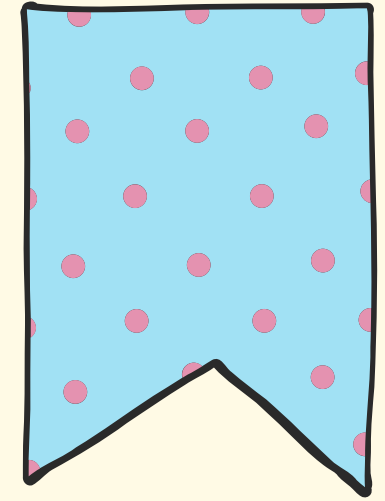
polysyllabic – break words down into their syllables to spell them

- batman bat/man
- hidden hid/den
- decide de/cide
- experience ex/pe/ri/ence

spell National Curriculum statutory words



Years 5 and 6
prefixes, suffixes and
morphology of words



Changes to be aware
of...

Tricky words/ HFW

A tricky word is a word that contains something the child cannot yet decode using the phonics code they have been taught.

Tricky words/HFW refer to them as having one of the more unusual spelling patterns (said, he, was)



'curly c' and 'kicking k'

'curly c' and 'kicking k' – we model on a whiteboard or piece of paper that in this word the c sound is represented with this letter (all about referring back to the sound)

Grapheme = the written representation, e.g. c or k

Phoneme = the sound, e.g. /k/

So c and k are different graphemes, but they can represent the same phoneme /k/.



Split spellings

Magic e/ split digraphs – now called split spellings, when we read a word with a split spelling of /ae/ we say /ae/ sound when we see the first part of it in the word.

e.g. m~~a~~e

The spelling ~~a~~_e represents the /ae/ sound.

m – ~~a~~ – k – e 

m – /ae/ – k 

The e is part of the split spelling ~~a~~_e, even though it comes later in the word.

Pure sounds

Pure sounds – be aware of muh, luh, nuh are **not** correct!

/m/ → “mmm” rather than “muh”

/s/ → “sss” rather than “suh”

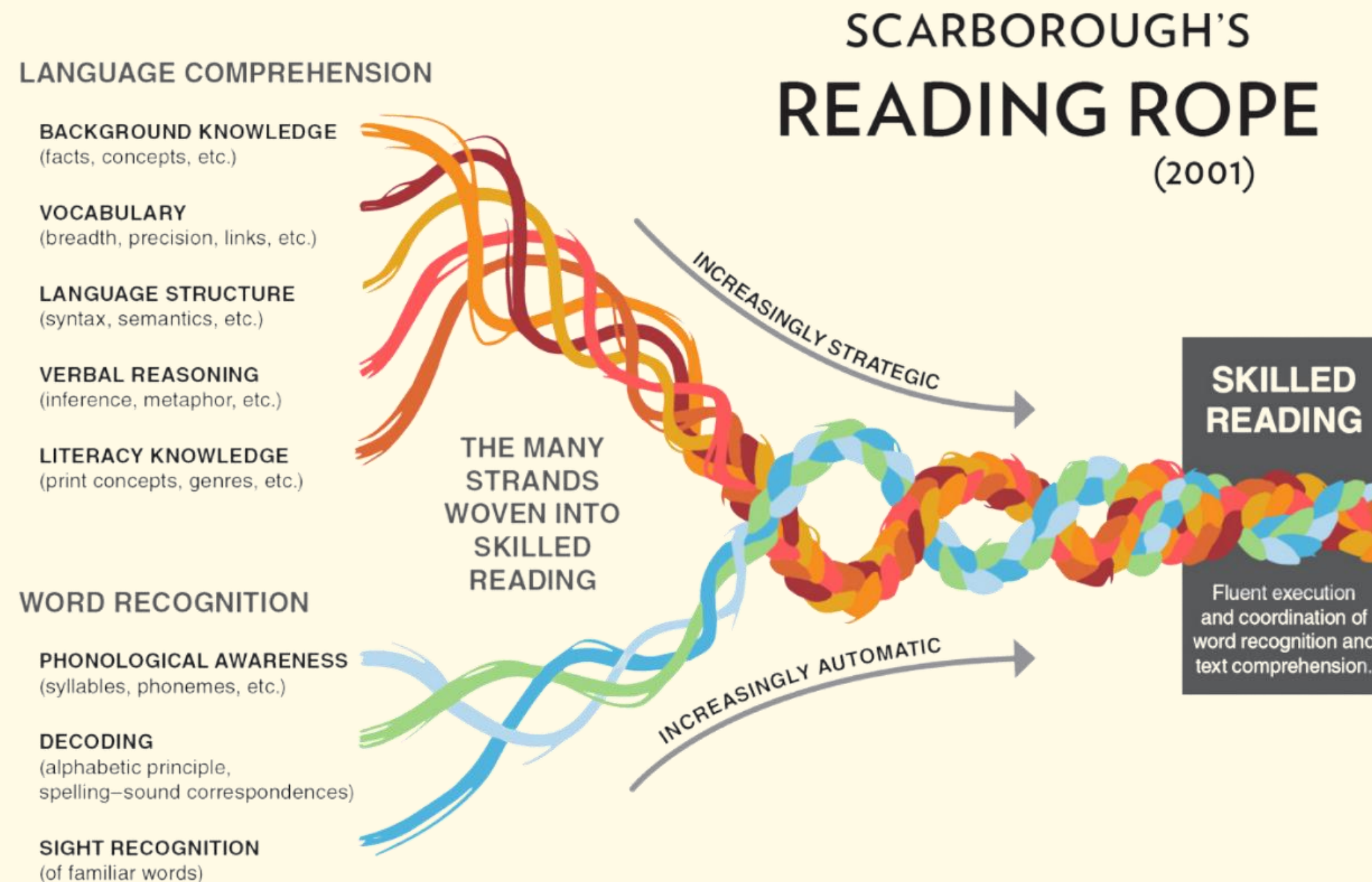
/f/ → “fff” rather than “fuh”

/t/ → a short, crisp /t/ rather than “tuh”

/p/ → a short /p/ rather than “puh”

The process of early reading

Decoding – this is where they segment and blend to decode a word.
Fluency – this is when they can read words without needing to decode. They need to re-read texts to develop fluency.



How parents can help...

Read little and often

Read a sentence together

Encourage your child to segment and blend unfamiliar words.

Help, don't test!

If they are struggling, give them support! Reading should feel positive and successful.

Re-read the sentence

Encourage them to read it again to develop fluency...and again if they're still happy to!

Check understanding

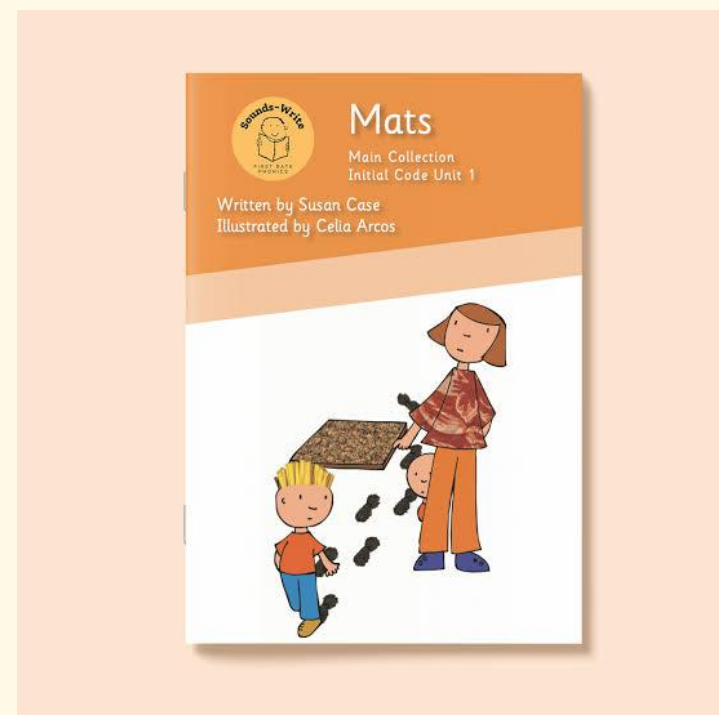
Once they can read the sentence fluently, ask a simple question about what they have read.

Reading books

Sounds-write books are functional – chance to practise blending, segmenting decoding skills.

Usually 2 or more units below what we are working on in our Sounds-Write lessons.

All KS1 children are also taking home a library book to have an adult at home read to them for 'richer read' and to develop language comprehension skills.



Thank
you!

