

Graphophonic knowledge refers to a reader's knowledge of letters and combinations of letters and the sounds associated with them.

First Steps: Reading Resource Book

Students need to be able to associate particular sounds with certain letter and letter combinations. Parents should look at the spelling lists in their child's spelling book: *Sound Waves* for guidance on the letter-sound relationships. There is also information about phonic rules in the back of the book. Students should be regularly working on these in class and for homework. You can also access the website: <http://www.fireflyeducation.com.au/soundwaves/>

When your child reads to you, make sure you let them sound out new words before jumping in to tell them what it is. However, you should not let them struggle for too long – instead, help them sound out the new word. Most books your child reads should have a variety of known words which students should automatically recognise (sight words) and some words which they will need to sound out initially.

To support your child at home, you may like to have some charts with words that they can apply their phonics knowledge to. Alphabet charts may also be good for younger children.

You can also create Word Walls with words that illustrate the particular phonic understanding your child is working on (unit in *Sound Waves* for example). For older children, this may include words with contractions, compound words, plurals, synonyms and antonyms. Create this wall of words with your child and talk about the patterns that you can identify in these words.

Word Sorts. Get your child to sort words into similar phonic groups e.g., all the words with "f", all the words with "ph" and all those with "ff". Are there any similarities within each group (e.g., 'ff' is never at the beginning of a word)? Alternatively, you can sort the words for them, not explaining how you have sorted them, and see if they can find out how you grouped them.

Change a Letter. This game involves students in creating new words by changing one letter at a time in a given word. This activity helps early readers to focus on the letters in a word and the sounds they make. Provide students with a four-letter word, e.g. 'stop'. Challenge them to change one letter to make a new word; e.g. 'step'. Initial, medial or final letters can be changed. Repeat with a new word.

Many of these activities come from *First Steps: Reading Map of Development*

For extra resources check out these websites:

http://www.speld-sa.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=105&Itemid=182

<http://www.free-phonics-worksheets.com/>

<http://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>

<http://jollylearning.co.uk/gallery/>