

# Phonics and grammar terminology

**Phoneme** = a single unit of sound – there are 44 of them in the English language (eg: s, a, t, ch, sh, th, air, ure, a\_e)

**Grapheme** = The letter or letters that represent a sound (phoneme) - its written form. (The 44 sounds are written in alternative ways – approximately 250 in English!)

**Digraph** = two letters that make one sound (eg: ch, sh, th, ng, ai, or)

**Trigraph** = three letters that make one sound (there are only four: igh, air, ear and ure).

**Split vowel digraph** = When one sound splits the a,e,i,o or u and the final e (there are only five: a\_e, e\_e, i\_e, o\_e, u\_e)

**Blending** = Building words for reading by pushing together all the phonemes (sounds) in the word.

**Segmenting** = Splitting up words for spelling by breaking up words into all of their sounds and then working out what letters are needed to represent each of the sounds.

**Consonants** = letters other than the **vowels** (a, e, i, o, u) The remaining 21 letters of the alphabet. Consonants work with vowels to form **syllables**.

**CVC word** = a word spelt with a consonant, vowel, consonant (e.g. cat, hat, mat, sit)

**CVCC word** = a word spelt with a consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant (e.g.lamp, hump, crack, tent).

**CCVC word** = a word spelt with a consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant, (e.g step, flag)

**Consonant blends** = letter combinations which are two single sounds but said fast together – they are not digraphs (e.g. bl, br, cl, dr, fl, gh, gr, pl, sc, sk, sn, st, sw, tr, tw, wr etc).

**Homophone** = words that sound the same but are different in meaning and spelling (e.g. flour and flower, right and write).

**Homograph** = words that are spelled the same but are different in meaning or pronunciation (e.g. bear: ‘to carry or support’ and ‘bear: the animal’ or lead: ‘to go first’ and lead: ‘the metal’).

**Base word** = A word to which a prefix or suffix is added to form a new word (e.g. see + ing = seeing, player + er = player).

**Compound word** = when you combine two or more words together to create a new, compound word e.g. football, railroad, moonlight, hair brush).

**Contraction** = a short way to write two words as one by writing the two words together, while leaving out one or more letters and using an apostrophe (e.g. do not = don't, would not = wouldn't, cannot = can't).

# Useful websites



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**Letters and Sounds**



**Mr Thorne does  
phonics**