

Teeny Reading Seeds

by Rachel Hornsey and Debbie Hepplewhite

Teeny Reading Seeds is for parents and carers and Early Years professionals to use with ‘teenies’ – that is, children around three to four years old.

Teeny Reading Seeds helps to link environmental print and the print in literature (rhymes, stories and information books) to the 26 letters of the alphabet (lower case and capital letters) and the sounds of English speech those letters represent. The resources are for use in the home and/or in Early Years settings to provide visual aids, games, activities for the children, and information for parents. All the resources can be viewed online or downloaded as pdfs to be printed as required. Remember that resources can be printed as ‘multiples on a page’ (a reduced size) to suit your needs.

Teeny Reading Seeds is designed for use before the introduction of a rigorous synthetic phonics programme (such as the Early Years Starter Package and the full Phonics International programme). **Teeny Reading Seeds**, however, is not a required first step before starting a full synthetic phonics programme with beginners from the age of four or five plus.

The order of introducing letters and sounds depends entirely on the preferences of the teacher or parent according to the topical and seasonal themes they choose – or as the children naturally gain knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Unlike a full systematic synthetic phonics teaching programme, there is no ‘set’ order of ‘letter and sounds’ introduction and there is also no necessity to focus on a cumulative bank of decodable words.

[Links to Phonics International and the PI Early Years Starter Package:](#)

Teeny Reading Seeds includes optional ‘actions’ mnemonics (aids to memory) along with some of the ‘key pictures’ and ‘key words’ of the Early Years Starter Package and the full Phonics International programme. Using the same key pictures and key words enables a smooth transition to later rigorous synthetic phonics teaching using further Phonics International resources.

Is there any phonics blending for reading, segmenting for spelling or handwriting?

Teachers and parents can model the sounding out and blending process for reading, the oral segmenting (splitting up the spoken word) for spelling, and handwriting. The children can practise writing letter shapes through a range of kinaesthetic activities (such as ‘air writing’ and through art and craft activities), and they can play games involving ‘saying the sounds’ on seeing the letter shapes. The children can have fun with oral blending and segmenting of the sounds – but at a much slower pace and with a wider variety of creative activities than in a full systematic synthetic phonics programme.

Teeny Reading Seeds is simply about **raising children’s awareness** allowing them to make links and assimilate ideas about reading and writing that inevitably they see in the world all around them – **but with no expectations regarding levels of achievement of the children themselves.**

We welcome cooperation from friends overseas to enrich **Teeny Reading Seeds** by suggesting age-appropriate literature in the English language that reflects cultures and traditions of other countries. Initially, any planning we add to the resource bank will suggest literature that is readily available and known in the UK but we would like to expand on the range of rhymes and books suggested.