

## Know Your Phonemes From Your Fred Talk!

Before you start to teach your child, practice saying the sounds below. These are the sounds we use to speak in English. We use pure sounds so that your child will be able to blend the sounds into words more easily. At school we use a puppet called Fred who can do this beautifully! When we say words in sounds we call it 'Fred Talk'. E.g. d-o-g, c-a-t, m-a-n, sh-o-p, c-l-a-p.

Please do not use letter names at this early stage.

These first sounds should all be stretched slightly. Try to avoid saying uh after each one.:

e.g. /mm/ not muh, /ss/ not suh, /ff/ not fuh.

m – mmmmmmountain (keep lips pressed together hard)

s – ssssssnake (keep teeth together and hiss – unvoiced)

n – nnnnnnet (keep tongue behind teeth)

f – ffffflower (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out sharply – unvoiced)

l – lllllleg (keep pointed curled tongue behind teeth).

r – rrrrrrobot (say rrr as if you are growling)

v – vvvvvvulture (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out gently)

z – zzzzzzig zzzzzag (keep teeth together and make a buzzing sound)

th – thhhhank you (stick out tongue and breathe out sharply)

sh – shhhh (make a shhh noise as though you are telling somebody to be quiet!)

ng – thinnnnngg on a strinnnnngg (curl your tongue at the back of your throat)

nk – I think I stink (make a piggy oink noise without the oi! nk nk nk)

These next sounds cannot be stretched. Make the sound as short as possible avoiding uh at the end of the sound:

t – (tick tongue behind the teeth – unvoiced)

p – (make distinctive p with lips – unvoiced)

k – (make sharp click at back of throat)

c – as above

h – (say h as you breathe sharply out – unvoiced)

ch – (make a short sneezing sound)

x – (say a sharp c and add s – unvoiced)

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You will find it harder to avoid saying uh at the end of these sounds.

d – (tap tongue behind the teeth).

g – (make soft sound in throat).

b – (make a short, strong b with lips).

j – (push lips forward).

y – (keep edges of tongue against teeth).

w – (keep lips tightly pursed).

qu – (keep lips pursed as you say cw – unvoiced).

**The short vowels should be kept short and sharp:**

a: a-a-a (open mouth wide as if to take a bite of an apple).

e: e-e-e (release mouth slightly from a position).

i: i-i-i (make a sharp sound at the back of the throat – smile).

o: o-o-o (push out lips, make the mouth into o shape).

u: u-u-u (make a sound in the throat).

**The Long vowel sounds are all stretchy sounds**

ay: ay may I play?

ee: ee what do you see?

igh: fly high

ow: blow the know

oo: poo at the zoo

oo: look at a book

ar: start the car

or: shut the door

air: that's not fair

ir: whirl and twirl

ou: shout it out

oy: toy for a boy

## Letter Formation - Read Write Inc

These are the sayings that help the children remember how to write each letter.

m: “down Maisie, up Maisie, mountain, mountain.”

a: “all around the apple, down the leaf”

s: “slither down the snake”

d: “round the dinosaurs bottom, up his tall neck and down to his toes.”

t: “down the tower and the steps, across the turrets.”

i: “down the insect’s body and tail and a dot for the head”.

n: “down Nobby, up Nobby, and over his net”

p: “from the parrot, down the plait, up and over the pirates face”.

g: “round the girl’s face, down her hair and give her a curl”

o: “all around the orange”

c: “curl around the caterpillar”

k: “down the kangaroo’s body, up and around his tail and down his leg”

u: “down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.”

b: “down the laces, up over the toe and touch the heel.”

f: “down the stem and curl then draw the leaves.”

e: “lift off the top and scoop out the egg.”

l: “down the long leg and the foot”

h: “down the head to the hooves, up and over the horse’s back.”

r: “down his back, up and over his arm.”

j: “down his body, curl and dot.”

v: “down a wing, up a wing”

y: “down a horn, up a horn and under his head.”

w: “down, up, down, up”

z: “zig zag zig”

qu: (q) “round her head, up to her crown and down to her hair” (u) “down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.”

x: “cross down the arm and leg and cross the other way.”

## Glossary

- Blending** Building words from their phonemes to spell.
- Digraph** A pair of letters representing one sound e.g. sh, th, ee
- Fred Talk** Talking in individual pure sounds so that children can sound-blend. So c-a-t = cat (say 'c' 'a' 't' *not* 'cuh' 'ah' 'tuh').
- Grapheme** The symbol of a phoneme – the letter or a group of letters that represent a sound.
- Green words** Words which can be read easily by sound-blending. They are called Green because once children have learned the graphemes, they can read and go!
- Phoneme** The smallest unit of sound in a word, also the sound a letter makes. For example the letter 'm' has the sound 'mmmmmm'.
- Red words** Words which can not be broken down and read easily by sound-blending. They are called Red because children have to stop and think about these words. Red words have to be learned by sight.

A presentation of how to correctly voice each phoneme can be accessed at  
[http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-site/expert-help/ruth-miskins-video-page?  
region=uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/reading-site/expert-help/ruth-miskins-video-page?region=uk)