



Foundation for Phonics



Focus for Preschool (Foundation Stage)

In preschool, the focus is mainly on **Phase 1**, which builds children's **listening skills**. Children are not yet learning letters and sounds, but instead:

Phase 1 (Ages 3-4): Developing Listening and Attention

It includes **7 key aspects**:

1. **Environmental Sounds** - e.g. listening to rain, birds, cars
2. **Instrumental Sounds** - exploring musical instruments
3. **Body Percussion** - clapping, stomping, tapping
4. **Rhythm and Rhyme** - singing nursery rhymes
5. **Alliteration** - noticing words that start with the same sound (e.g. *Sam sips soup*)
6. **Voice Sounds** - experimenting with different voice sounds
7. **Oral Blending and Segmenting** - e.g. hearing "c-a-t" and saying "cat"

This helps prepare children for **Phase 2 phonics** in Reception (age 4-5), when formal teaching of letters and sounds begins.

How You Can Help at Home

Here are practical ways to support your child:

1. Sing Nursery Rhymes Daily

- Rhymes like *Twinkle Twinkle*, *Humpty Dumpty*, *Five Little Ducks*
- Emphasise rhyming words and rhythm

2. Play Listening Games

- Go on a "sound walk" and ask: *What can you hear?*
- Play "Guess the sound" (use kitchen objects, animal noises, etc.)

3. Read Stories Together Every Day

- Talk about sounds, rhyme, and story structure
- Ask: *What do you think will happen next? Can you hear any rhyming words?*

4. Play with Voice Sounds

- Try sound effects: robot voices, animal sounds, whispering, shouting
- Make silly sound games: *Can you make a sound like a snake? Sssss!*

5. Try Simple Blending Games

- Say the sounds of a word slowly: "c-a-t" - can your child guess the word?
- Use real objects: "Can you find the b-a-g?" and point to a bag

Sound Hunt Checklist

Go on a walk or sit quietly at home. Can your child hear and identify these sounds?

- ☐ Bird singing
- ☐ Dog barking
- ☐ Car engine
- ☐ Water running
- ☐ Clock ticking
- ☐ Footsteps
- ☐ Wind blowing
- ☐ Door closing
- ☐ Music playing
- ☐ People talking

Talk about each sound—where is it coming from? What makes that sound?

Voice Sounds Activity

Ask your child to make these voice sounds

- Say "weeeee!" like you're on a slide.
- Make a "ssss" like a snake.
- Make a loud "BOO!" like a ghost.
- Whisper like you're telling a secret.
- Say "brrr" like you're cold.
- Moo like a cow.
- Make a robot voice: "b-e-e-p!"
- Say "pop pop pop" like popcorn.

Oral Blending Game: 'Can You Find It?'

Say a word slowly in 'sound talk' (e.g. b-a-g) and ask your child to find or point to it.

Use objects around the house: a hat, bag, cup, sock, pen, etc.

Example prompts:

- Can you find the c-u-p?
- Where is the h-a-t?
- Let's touch the p-e-n.