**Glossary of terms**

**Adjacent consonants** Consonants which appear next to each other in a word and can be blended together, e.g. *bl* in *blip, cr* in *crack* (note that the *ck* in *crack* is a digraph as the consonants come together to form a single sound or phoneme). Adjacent consonants are also referred to as ‘consonant blends’ in some phonics schemes.

**Alliteration** A sequence of words beginning with the same sound.

**Analytic phonics** Children learn to identify (analyse) the common phoneme in sets of words in which each word contains the phoneme that is the focus of the lesson. For instance, they might be asked to listen to the words *big, bag* and *bat* and decide in what ways the words sound alike. The focus is on identifying patterns in words and drawing analogies.

**Blend** A combination of letters where individual letters retain their sounds. The consonants retain their original sounds but are blended together, as in *slip, cram, blink* and *flop.*

**Blending** To draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. /c/l/a/p/, blended together reads *clap.*

**Common exception words** This is the term used in the 2013 English National Curriculum for common words with unusual grapheme–phoneme correspondences. These are the words which Letters and Sounds and other phonics programmes refer to as ‘tricky words’. They are common words with phonic irregularities, e.g. *one, who, should.* See also *Tricky words*.

**Consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) Words** Children’s early reading experiences will include words like *cat, dog, sit* and *pin*, which have single letters for each sound. Later, CVC words will include those with digraphs such as *ship, cheap* and *wish*.

**Decodable** Words which can be easily decoded using phonic strategies, e.g. *cat, dog, lamp.*

**Decoding** The act of translating graphemes into phonemes, i.e. reading.

**Digraph** Two letters which combine to make a new sound.

**Encoding** The act of transcribing units of sound or phonemes into graphemes, i.e. spelling.

**Etymology** The origins of the formation of a word and its meaning.

**Grapheme** A letter, or combination of letters, which represent a phoneme.

**Homographs** Words which are spelled the same but pronounced differently according to context, e.g. ‘That’s a new world *record?’,* ‘I’ll *record* The Archers and listen to it later’.

**Homonyms** Words which are spelled and pronounced in the same way, but have different meanings, e.g. *bear*: ‘I can’t *bear* it any longer’, ‘The large *bear* growled’.

**Homophones** Words which sound the same but have different spellings and meanings, e.g. *sea* and *see, their* and *there.*

**Initial consonant** Consonant letter at the beginning of a word.

**Kinaesthetic** Some people learn better using some form of physical (kinaesthetic) activity; hence the use of actions to accompany phonemes and graphemes in Jolly Phonics.

**Long vowel phonemes** The long vowel sounds as in *feel* or *cold.*

**Mnemonic** A device for remembering something, such as ‘ee/ee/ feel the tree’.

**Monosyllabic word** Word with one syllable, e.g. *big, black, club, drop.*

**Morpheme** The smallest unit of meaning, e.g. *help* is a single morpheme, but we could add the suffix *-ful* to make *helpful,* and go on to add the prefix *un-* to make *unhelpful,* which has three morphemes.

**Multi-sensory** Using a broad range of senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, moving).

**Onset** The onset is the part of the word before the vowel; not all words have onsets. In *brush, br* is the onset (but note that *br* is two sounds). *Add* and *up* do not have onsets (there is no consonant phoneme before the vowel).

**Orthographic system** The spelling system of a language, i.e. the ways in which graphemes and phonemes relate to each other. The English orthographic system is more complex than many languages, since most phonemes can be represented by more than one grapheme.

**Orthography** Standardised spelling – the sounds of a language represented by written or printed symbols.

**Phoneme** The smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters *ch* representing one sound.

**Phonemic awareness** An understanding that letters can be sounded as phonemes and can be put together to create words.

**Phonetics** The articulation and acoustic features of speech sounds. It explains the distinction between consonants and vowels and can help listeners identify the phonemic pattern of words.

**Phonological awareness** The ability to perceive, recall and manipulate sounds.

**Prefix** Morpheme or affix placed before a word to modify its meaning, e.g. *dis-* in *dislike, de-* in *defrost.*

**Rhyme** Words that sound the same but do not necessarily share the same spelling.

**Rime** The rime of a word is the vowel and the rest of the syllable, e.g. the rime in *black* is -*ack*; the rime in *flop* is -*op*.

**Segmenting** Splitting up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, i.e. the word *pat* has three phonemes: /p/a/t/.

**Split digraph** Two letters, making one sound, e.g. *a-e* as in *cake.*

**Suffix** Morpheme or affix added to a word to modify its meaning, e.g. *-ful* in *hopeful*, *-ed in jumped.*

**Syllable** A unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound. This can be taught by identifying ‘beats’ in a word. Putting a hand flat underneath your chin and then saying a word can help, as every time the hand moves, it represents another syllable.

**Synthetic phonics** Synthetic phonics involves separating words into phonemes and then blending the phonemes together to read the word. This compares with analytic phonics in which segments or parts of words are analysed and patterns are compared with other words.

**Tricky words** When teaching systematic synthetic phonics, we refer to common words with phonic irregularities as ‘tricky words’, e.g. *once, was, could.* See also *Common exception words*.

**Trigraph** Three letters which combine to make a new sound.