



Phonics for All

Manual

Smartbox

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Welcome to



Phonics for All

Many people that use AAC don't have the ability to sound out words, which is an important part of language development. Phonics for All helps to fill this gap by teaching the key sounds that make up the English language.

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Candle – Communication and Learning, Education for All

What is Phonics for All

Phonics for All is a reading and spelling programme that support users of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) who are learning to read and write.

It was created by Special Educational Needs teacher and AAC practitioner Marion Stanton, and follows a simple structure that complements school's normal phonics programmes. The scheme has been trialled with a number of students, many of whom have gone on to become literate.

Included in Phonics for All:

- Single letter sounds
- Diagraphs
- Medial sounds
- Initial blends
- Final blends
- Rimes 1 & 2
- Medial double consonants
- Tricky sounds
- End of unit tests
- Model answers
- Record of achievement

Many students with communication impairments will have gaps in their knowledge. They may have good language understanding but poor literacy.

Phonics for All provides the opportunity for practice; meeting the needs of students who require more time to absorb learning, and supporting the need for repetition and over-learning.

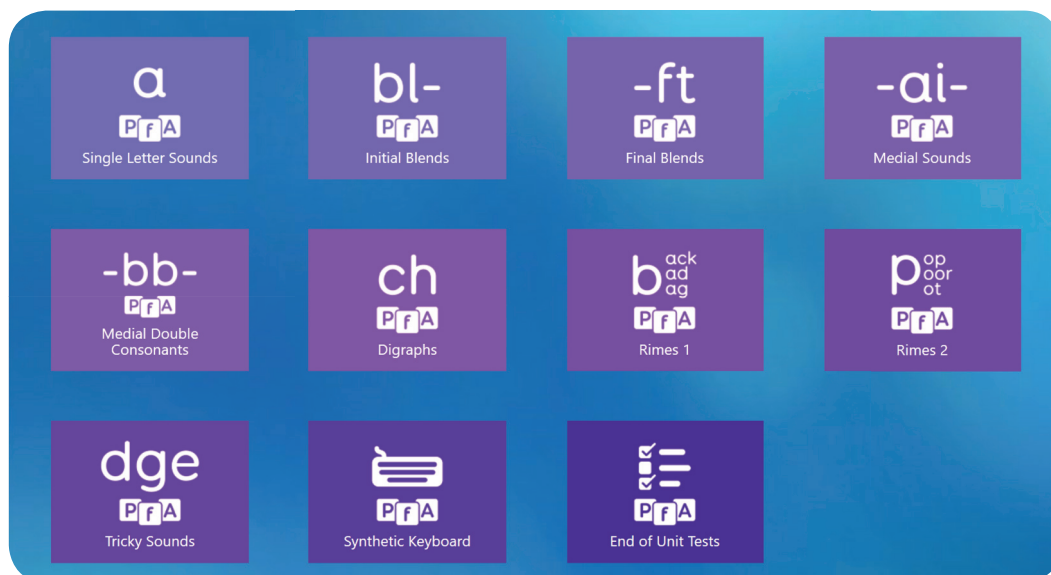
It also supports comprehension, so students with complex needs can begin to read for meaning alongside their acquisition of phonic knowledge.

Phonics for All uses symbols that are familiar to users of AAC, but also illustrative; so that they become useful visual supports for all learners.

Each grid set focuses on a phoneme (small unit of sound), a blend (two or three letters that together make a consonant blended sound) or an analogic phonic (unit of sound that is usually a rime).

The scheme has been designed to encourage independent learning. Once familiar with the learning format, students can continue to work through the tasks and complete the units unaided.

Phonics for All can also be used in whole class instruction. Begin by going through the relevant Phonics for All grid with the whole class, encouraging non-verbal students to join in using the synthetic practice grids. You can extend the work with table-based activities of your own chosen design to supplement the sound grid.



Phonics for All grid sets

a

Single Letter Sounds

The starting point for Phonics for All is the Single Letter Sounds grid set. This explores the smallest unit of sound, a single letter on its own.

ch

Diagraphs

This grid set explores the main digraphs which can either be found at the beginning or end of the word. Students work through the different consonants that make one sound.

-ai-

Medial Sounds

The Medial Sounds grid set teaches the vowel combinations that are generally occur in the middle of a word.

bl-

Initial Blends

Explore how two letters together at the beginning of a word are blended together with clear visual examples.

-ft

Final Blends

The Final Blends grid set covers the common end sounds to words that are blended together. The student can visualise and hear in the same way as initial blends.

b
ack
ad
ag

Rimes 1 and 2

The Rimes grid sets support the use of initial letter or blend (onset) and the rhyming string of letters that follow. This is helpful to AAC users who may generalise rime sounds to other words.

-bb-

Medial Double Consonants

The Medial Double Consonant grid set builds activities around those tricky letters that occur twice in the middle of a word when the word has two syllables.

dge

Tricky Sounds

Tricky sounds are just that! Explore sounds that have a combination of more than two consonants and a vowel, and other difficult combinations.



Synthetic Keyboard

This keyboard grid set enables the student to practice with a keyboard that has sounds rather than letter names embedded in it.



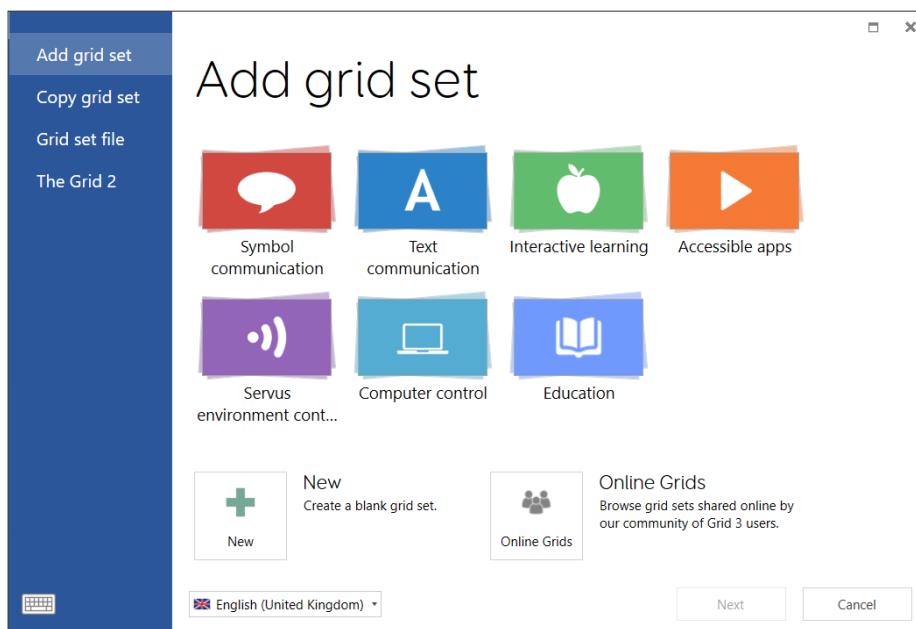
End of Unit Tests

End of unit tests are useful to use as base-lines before starting the programme. Administer them again at the end of each unit to measure progress. Where a student is still having problems, repeat the exercises, then re-test.

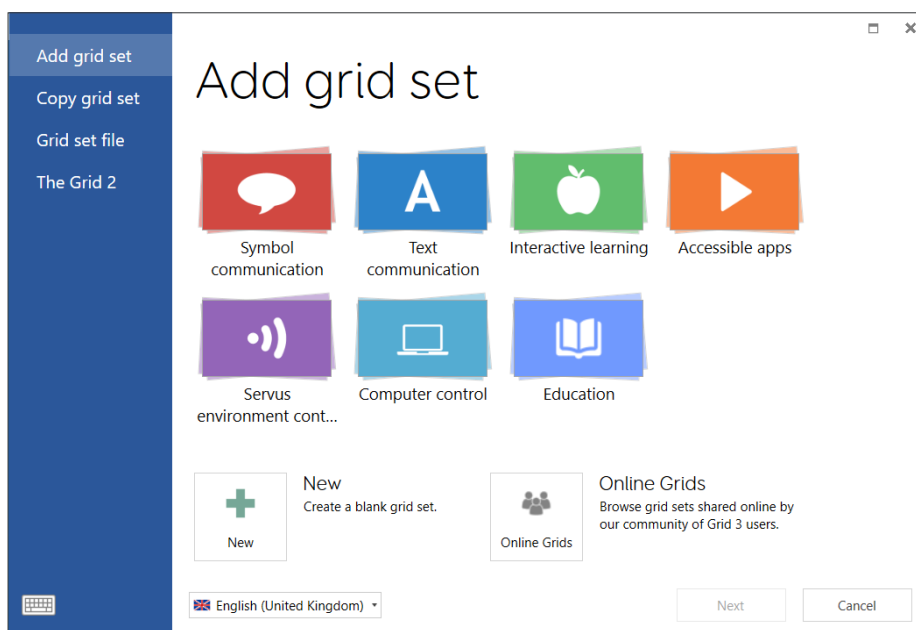


Installing Phonics for All

To install the Phonics for All grid sets you will need to open your Grid 3 user and select **Add grid set** from the Menu.

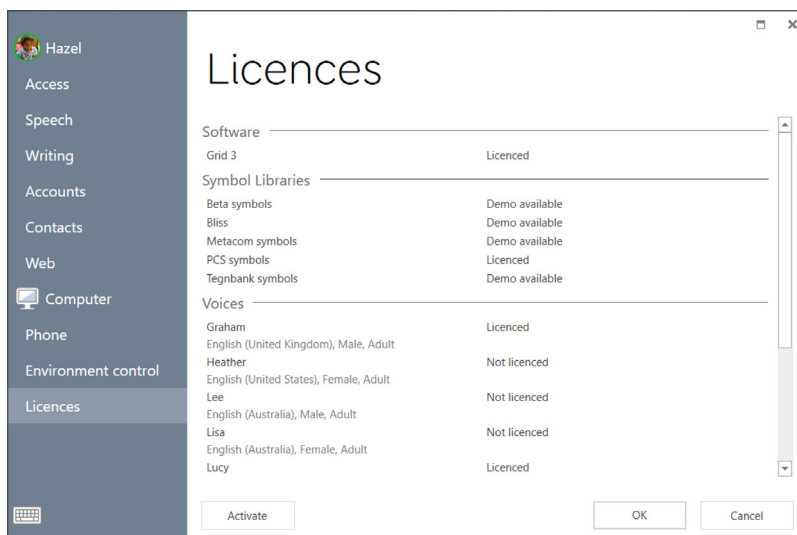


The Phonics for All grid sets are found in the **Education** section. Open the **Phonics for All** folder and select the grid set that you would like to add.

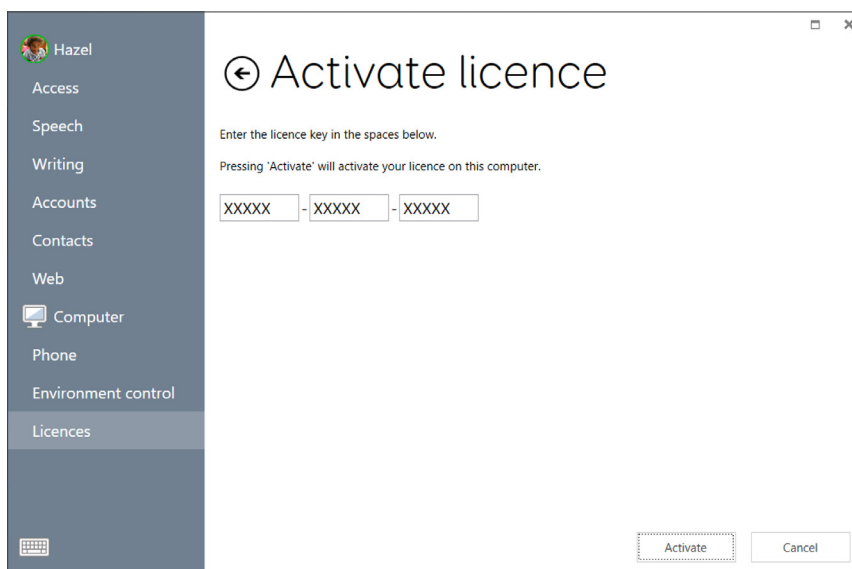


Licensing Phonics for All

To use the Phonics for All grid sets you will need to activate your licence. Ensure that your device is connected to the internet and open Grid 3. Then select **Settings** from the Menu.



The **Licences** section is found at the bottom of the tabs. This will list the status of each licence you are currently using. Select **Activate**.



Enter your 15 digit licence key and select **Activate**. Grid 3 will connect to the internet and activate Phonics for All.

Note: If you do not have an internet connection available on your device, you can perform an offline activation. For more information visit:

thinksmartbox.com/answer/activate-smartbox-software-without-an-internet-connection

Using Phonics for All

This is the workspace. This box will give you instructions as well as space to input answers to certain activities. The contents of the workspace can be printed once an activity is complete.

Read out loud instructions for the current activity.

[Input Box]			Instructions
car	cat	cut	Tools
cow	cup	cot	Rest
			Move to the next activity
			Move to the previous activity

Cells for the current activity appear in the centre of the grid. The size and number of cells vary depending on the activity.

Open the Tools grid (see page 19)

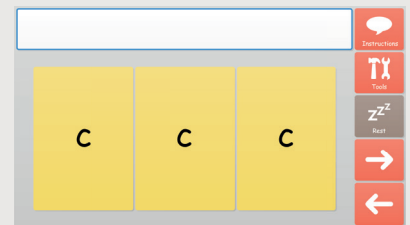
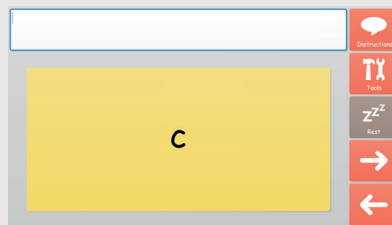
Example exercise: Single letter sounds

The first grid set in Phonics for All is **Single Letter Sounds**, where the letters of the alphabet are initial letters in words. Instructions for each activity are located in the top right cell.

You might want to type the name of the student and title of the activity into the workspace before the student starts, as each activity will generate a PDF that you can print or save.

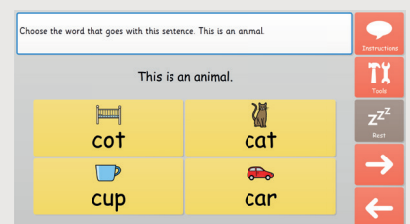
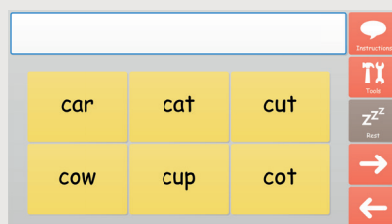
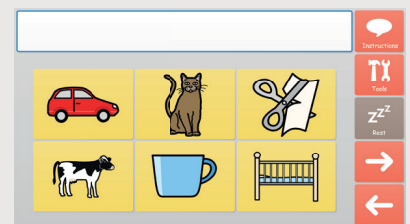
Listen to the sound

Students begin by practicing the sound of the letter. Selecting the cells trigger the audio.



Listen to the words

After initial practice of the sound, students listen to a selection of six words that use the sound. These are played both with and without picture and word support. The aim is to help the student to internalise the word shape as well as the sound.



Listen to the meaning

Students learn about homonyms and homographs, when a word that is spelt the same occurs but has two different meanings.

The interface features a white text input box at the top. Below it is a yellow square containing a saw and a face with two vertical lines for eyes. To the right of this are two white boxes: the top one shows a saw icon and the text "He cut the wood with a saw.", and the bottom one shows the face icon and the text "They saw a bird in the sky." On the far right is a vertical toolbar with five red buttons: "Instructions" (speech bubble icon), "Tools" (wrench and screwdriver icon), "Rest" (ZZZ icon), a right-pointing arrow, and a left-pointing arrow.

Make the word

Words are broken down into chunks to support phoneme, blend, and analogy sight and sound recognition. This may help some students to generalise other words containing the same pattern. Sounds that do not make a recognisable word are included as decoys.





The interface features a white text input box at the top containing the instruction: "See if you can make some of the words we have been looking at and listening to. Be careful some of the sounds may not make a word." Below this is a grid of word chunks. On the left is a large orange square with the letter "C". To its right are two rows of four green squares each. The top row contains "at", "up", "oo", and "ar". The bottom row contains "ag", "ow", "ot", and "ut". On the far right is a vertical toolbar with five red buttons: "Instructions" (speech bubble icon), "Tools" (wrench and screwdriver icon), "Rest" (ZZZ icon), a right-pointing arrow, and a left-pointing arrow.

Comprehension activities

Comprehensive activities place the focus sound in a context, and the student can demonstrate that they understand the meaning of the word.

Choose the word that goes with this sentence. This is an animal.

This is an animal.

 cot	 cat
 cup	 car



Instructions
Tools
Rest
→
←

Memory and auditory sound recognition

Students focus on memory and auditory sound recognition, initially with picture support and then with sound only.

Select the cell that has the sound.

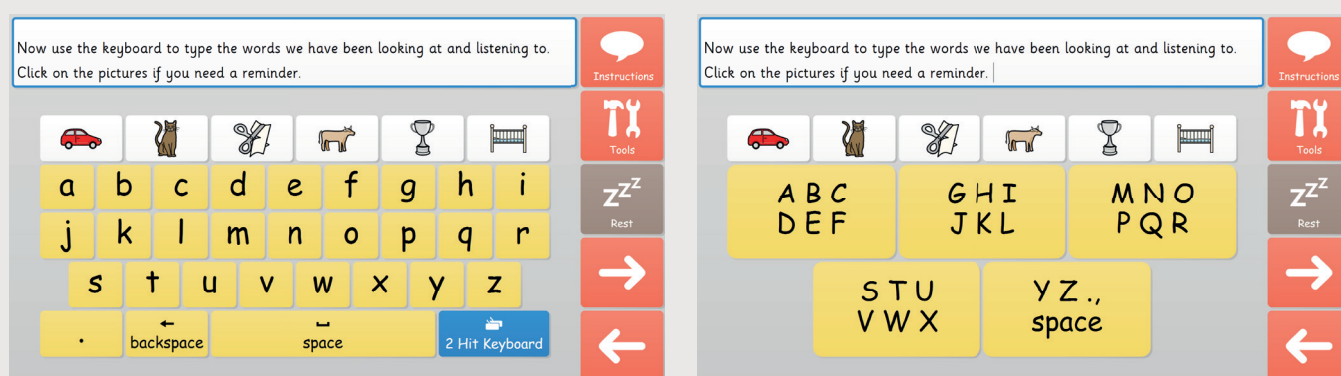
Select the cell that has the sound.

 1.	 2.
---	---

Instructions
Tools
Rest
→
←

Keyboard

The keyboard grid enables students to practice spelling the example words. For those who need it, there is also a Two Hit keyboard.



The activities in **Single Letter Sounds** end here. The student will now have the option to save or print their work (see **Printing your work** on page 18).

Further comprehension activities

Some grid sets in Phonics for All contain more complex activities to test the students comprehension skills.

Auditory activities

Students are asked to choose the most appropriate sentence from a set of plausible options.

Instructions

Listen to these sentences.

We had a nice tennis.

We had a nice breakfast.

We had a nice dinner.

We had a nice lunch.

Tools

Rest

→

←

Instructions

Select the best sentence.

We had a nice tennis.

We had a nice breakfast.

We had a nice dinner.

We had a nice lunch.

Tools

Rest

→

←

Cloze comprehension

Cloze comprehension tasks challenge the student to select the most appropriate word to complete a sentence.

Instructions

Choose the word below that goes with the sentence.

He drove through the

in his van.

tennis

funny

dinner

tunnel

Tools

Rest

→

←

Sentence sequence

Students are asked to sequence a sentence using the key sound, and then to type a logical sentence themselves

Now make a sentence using a word that has the sound. Click on the examples for some ideas.

Sentence example 1	Sentence example 2	Sentence example 3			
He	through	good	funny	had	tunnel.
We	bunny	a	drove	her	joke.
She	made	his	nice	the	dinner.

Instructions
Tools
zzz Rest
→
←

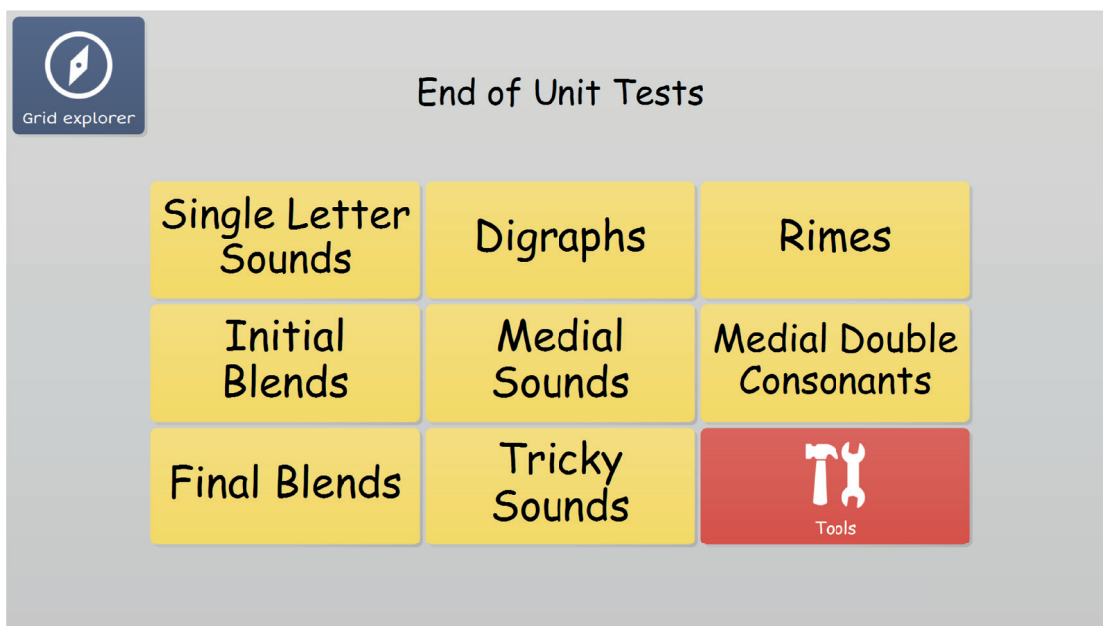
Now type the sentence using only the keyboard. Click on the examples if you need to hear the ideas again.

Sentence example 1	Sentence example 2	Sentence example 3						
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r
s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	
.	← Backspace	Space	→ 2 Hit Keyboard					

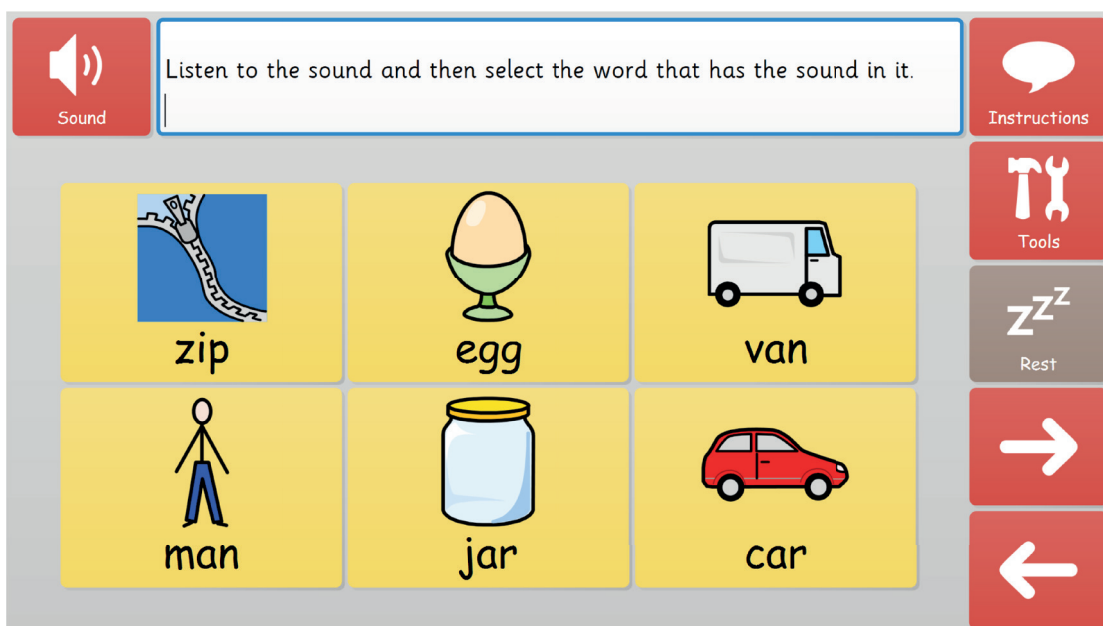
Instructions
Tools
zzz Rest
→
←

End of unit tests

For each unit in Phonics for All there is an end of unit test. You can use the end of unit tests to assess a student's needs and progress, by asking the student to work through them before and after completing each grid set.



The screen is titled "End of Unit Tests" and features a "Grid explorer" icon in the top left. It contains a 3x3 grid of buttons. The buttons are: "Single Letter Sounds", "Digraphs", "Rimes", "Initial Blends", "Medial Sounds", "Medial Double Consonants", "Final Blends", "Tricky Sounds", and "Tools" (which is highlighted in red and contains a wrench and screwdriver icon).



The interface includes a "Sound" button with a speaker icon, an "Instructions" button with a speech bubble icon, and a "Tools" button with a wrench and screwdriver icon. A text box contains the instruction: "Listen to the sound and then select the word that has the sound in it." Below this are six word cards: "zip" (with a zipper icon), "egg" (with an egg icon), "van" (with a white van icon), "man" (with a stick figure icon), "jar" (with a glass jar icon), and "car" (with a red car icon). On the right side, there are three more buttons: "Rest" with a zzz icon, a right-pointing arrow, and a left-pointing arrow.

Printing your work

Once the student has completed an activity, their work can be saved to a PDF or printed for the teacher to mark. Each answer is recorded so that the teacher can analyse the student's learning support needs.

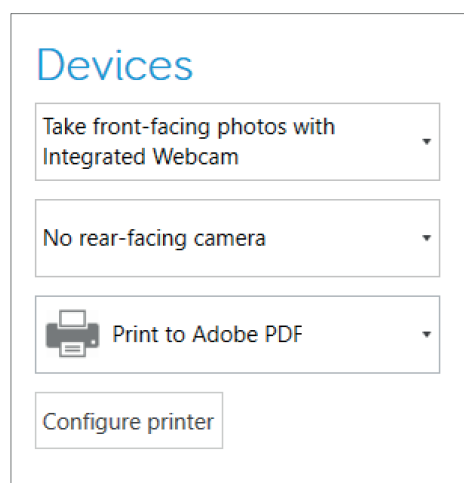
Start each session by adding the date, the student's name and the title at the beginning of each task and pressing return. This will help you keep track of the activities that students have completed.

Lucy George - Class 9S - Thursday 25th April
Single Letter Sounds - C

The last grid in each activity will prompt the student to print their work.

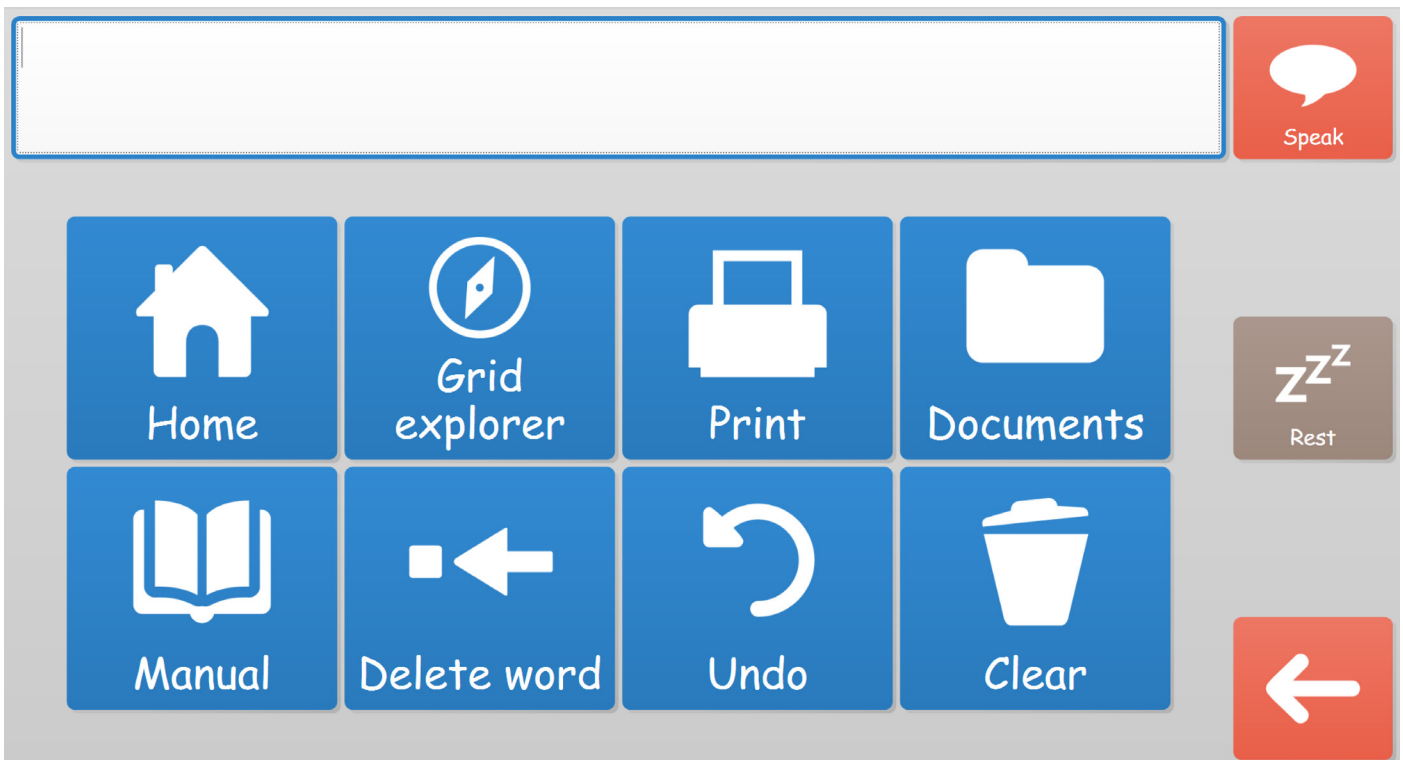


In order to save the student's work as a PDF, you need to ensure that the printer is set up to **Print to PDF**. This is found under the **Devices** heading in **Menu > Settings > Computer**.



Tools

You can navigate to the **Tools** grid from any activity in Phonics for All.



Home

Returns you to the exercise homepage

Grid Explorer

Exit the grid set and return to Grid Explorer

Print

Prints all text in the workspace, enabling you to print work in the middle of an activity

Documents

A list of all the documents created with Phonics for All

Manual

Open the Phonics for All manual

Delete word

Remove the last word in the workspace

Undo

Undo the last action on the workspace

Clear

Clear the workspace

The research behind Phonics for All

Primary schools in England are currently directed to focus on systematic, synthetic phonics which should be delivered during reception and year 1. There is research to support the use of synthetic phonics, most notably a Scottish study in 2005 demonstrated that synthetic phonics had longer term benefits than other phonic strategies, when observed over a 16-week period and then when the same students were revisited after a period of time. There is little doubt that synthetic phonics supports the acquisition of reading accuracy in the population of students who are able to speak. This group can practice the sounds in rapid succession during the phase of education that intense phonics instruction is currently taught. It is ideal for this phase to be completed quickly so that the students can then go on to use a range of strategies for developing wider literacy skills.

There is research that suggests systematic phonics is more effective than non-phonics programmes but that a range of phonic approaches can be usefully employed and that to focus only on synthetic phonics is concerning.

While there is evidence to support the use of synthetic phonics, the student who has communication difficulty may need an adjusted approach in their access to literary instruction. The Rose Report concluded that synthetic phonics was the appropriate early learning strategy for the “vast majority of young children”. By implication then there is a small minority for whom it is not. An obvious issue that needs no research is that the student with severe communication impairment will be unlikely to access phonics at the same fast pace as their non-disabled peers. They will often take very much longer than their non-disabled peers to get a grip on letter sound correspondence. Synthetic phonics is not intended to teach the student to read for meaning. Because of the longer time they are likely to take to acquire phonic skills, it is not realistic to expect students with complex needs to wait until they have completed their phonics instruction before they begin to read for meaning. There is also evidence that this group is likely to come to the literacy experience with less vocabulary knowledge than their non-disabled peers, which places them in a different readiness for phonics instruction. The inclusion of comprehension activities within Phonics for All addresses this.

Karen Erickson has examined the problems that students who rely on AAC face when they are acquiring literacy. These include:

- Difficulty with inner speech.
- Difficulty with visual scanning.
- Lack of rehearsal.
- Difficulty in reading silently with comprehension.

Time is the enemy of the student who relies on AAC. These young people may have the capacity to learn but because of the time it takes to physically record their work, they may lag behind their peers. This results in the normal presentation of synthetic phonics being inappropriate for students who use AAC. Rapid fire learning with fast paced vocalisation is not an option. In addition, the extra physical effort that the student expends accessing their learning aid creates an extra cognitive load, as the students must attend to the tool they are using as well as the content. Ease of access to learning is essential.

Students need to have the context of a literary rich environment to accompany direct sound letter correspondence training. Phonics for All provides a range of activities to support the learner who needs to supplement letter sound correspondence with comprehension tasks. It also has elements that support working memory, language and grammar. Synthetic phonics practice can be accessed in Phonics for All by using the 'Practice Cells'.

In trials of Phonics for All we have noticed that students who have some speech have an opportunity to practice their vocalisations using the programme. Further research is needed but we are excited by this and hope that the programme might help the group of students who have articulation issues and the group who have word finding issues.

When showing the programme to professionals who work in the mainstream we were pleased to learn that they considered it a potential tool for all students, including those in the top sets in primary school.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/02/20688/52449> [accessed 20th February 2014]

Wyse, D and Styles, M. "Synthetic Phonics and the Teaching of Reading: the debate surrounding England's "Rose Report", in Literacy, Volume 41, Number 1, April 2007

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100526143644/http://standards.dcsf.gov.uk/phonics/report.pdf> [accessed 20th February 2014]

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/2048-416X.2013.12000.x/pdf> [accessed 20th February 2014]

Erikson et al (June 17th 2009) "Research Based Practice for Creating Access to the General Curriculum in Reading and Literacy for Students with Significant Disabilities." Centre for Literacy and Disability, University of North Carolina, p67

Erikson, K (2003, June 24th). Reading Comprehension in AAC. The ASHA Leader

Erikson et al (June 17th 2009) ibid p116

About Marion Stanton

Marion Stanton is a Special Needs Teacher and AAC specialist. She is the author of 'Understanding Cerebral Palsy' and 'Can I tell you about Cerebral Palsy'. Marion is also the lead trainer and assessor for (Communication and Learning Enterprises – CandLE) and has been supporting communication, literacy and curriculum access in special and mainstream schools since its inception in 2008. Prior to 2008 she worked in North London as director of a charity with similar aims. She has spoken at national and international events.

Marion has three children, one of whom, 28-year-old Dan, has cerebral palsy and is an AAC user. Dan was fortunate enough to go to a school that ensured that he had access to literacy in a way that was meaningful for him. This personal experience encouraged Marion to develop her own learning programmes for students who rely on AAC and other students who have complex needs. Marion's programmes of learning have resulted in some very successful outcomes for learners, including the achievement of entry level, GCSE and A level qualifications.

At CandLE, Marion leads a team of teachers, programme writers, teaching assistants and Speech and Language Therapists who work together to produce materials and to support students who have complex needs with curriculum access and literacy support. CandLE also offers assessments in Communication and Learning and various training packages.

Find out more at www.candleaac.com

Marion has certification and/or accreditation in the following:

- Post Graduate Certificate in Education, University College London.
- Advanced diploma in special needs in education, O.U.
- Developing communication through technology for individuals with physical and/or communication difficulties – Manchester Metropolitan University.
- Master trainer from Institute on Communication and Inclusion, Syracuse University.
- PECS advanced training, Pyramid Education
- Talking Mats training,
- PODD (pragmatic organisation dynamic display) Introductory workshop
- Certified trainer Text Help Read & Write Gold
- Council for the advancement of communication with deaf people, stage 1 Certificate in British Sign Language
- Partners in policy making
- Disability Equality in Education
- Introductory LAMP (Language Acquisition through Motor Planning) training

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