



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education



Phonics Checks – matching written letters to the sounds they make



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About this Easy Read



**Te Tāhuhu o
te Mātauranga**
Ministry of Education

This Easy Read is from the **Ministry of Education**.



The **Ministry of Education** is the part of the Government in charge of schools in Aotearoa New Zealand.



This Easy Read is about **Phonics Checks**.



Phonics Checks are a type of test your child will do in their first year at school.



Phonics Checks support teachers to know how your child is doing at learning to read.



You can learn more about Phonics

Checks on this **website**:

<https://tinyurl.com/bdd6m576>



This website is **not** in Easy Read.

What is phonics?



Phonics is an important part of learning to read.



Phonics is being able to match written letters to the sounds they make.



An example of phonics is knowing that the letter m makes the sound mmmmm in the word man.



At school children learn to:

- know what sound each letter makes
- join the sounds together to make words.





Children also learn what sound 2 letters make if the 2 letters make 1 sound.



An example of 2 letters making 1 sound is the ch sound in children.



Children use phonics to work out what new words say when they are reading.



Learning to join sounds supports children to read new words the right way.



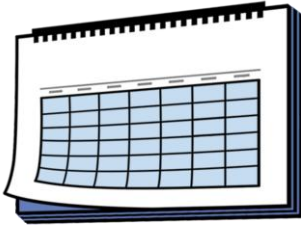
This supports children to be good readers as they grow up.



This **video** shows you how phonics works:

<https://tinyurl.com/ke8fhret>

What happens in Phonics Checks?



Your child will do Phonics Checks after they have been at school for:

- 20 weeks / 2 terms
- 40 weeks / 1 year.



The Phonics Check is quick.



Most children find the Phonics Checks fun.



In the Phonics Check your child will read words out loud.

Some of the words are real.



Some of the words are fake.

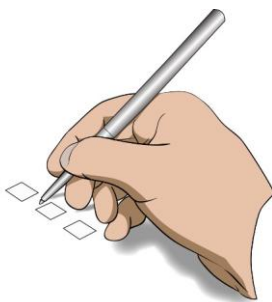


The fake words show the teacher if your child knows how to use letter sounds to read words they have not seen before.



The Phonics Checks show the teacher:

- what letters your child can read
- if your child can join sounds to read words properly.



If your child finds the Phonics Check hard the teacher will stop the check after they get 5 answers wrong in a row.

Finding out how your child did in their Phonics Checks



To find out how your child did in their Phonics Checks you can talk to their:

- teacher
- principal.



The Ministry of Education will also collect **data** from Phonics Checks.



Here **data** means information about Phonics Checks like how many children pass each Phonics Check.



The data will support the Ministry of Education to know how well schools are doing at teaching children to read.

Why have we started doing Phonics Checks?



Phonics Checks are already done in countries like:

- Australia
- the UK.



Aotearoa New Zealand is starting to use **structured literacy**.



Structured literacy is a way of teaching children to:

- read
- write.



Phonics is an important part of structured literacy.



The Phonics Checks will support teachers to know:

- how your child is doing with learning to read
- what your child needs to work on next.



Phonics Checks will support the Ministry of Education to know if structured literacy is working.

How to support your child with phonics



There are lots of things you can do at home to support your child to learn phonics.



You can use phonics when you are talking to your child.

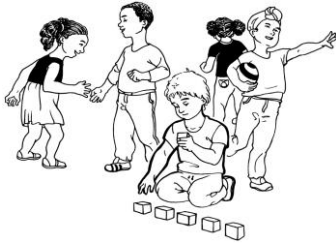


For example you can ask your child what sounds the **ingredients** start with when you are cooking.



Ingredients are the foods you put together to make a meal.

For example tomatoes are an ingredient in pasta sauce.



You can do **sound sorting**.



Sound sorting is an activity where you:

- print out pictures of things that start with different sounds
- ask your child to put all the pictures that start with the same sound in a pile.



For example you could print out pictures of:

- a bed
- a chair
- a bird
- children.



Bed and bird both start with b so they would go in the same pile.

Chair and children both start with ch so they would go in the same pile.



You can also do sound sorting with objects like toys instead of pictures.



You can:

- write easy words using:
 - letter magnets
 - letter tiles like Scrabble tiles
- ask your child to sound out the words.

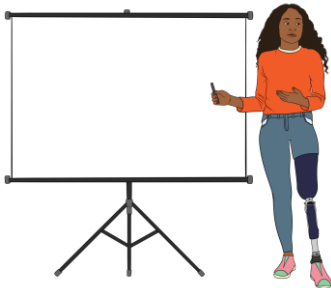


You can play the game snap using cards with letters on them.



You get snap when 2 letters match.

You can ask your child what sound the letters make.



The Ministry of Education has some slides you can use to support your child to practise phonics.



If your child is in their first 6 months at school use these slides:

<https://tinyurl.com/ybv5pfr8>



If your child is in Year 1 use these slides:

<https://tinyurl.com/2fryjuy7>



If your child is in Year 2 use these slides:

<https://tinyurl.com/2j9bdnss>



The slides are **not** in Easy Read.



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