

The Raglan Schools

Definition of synthetic and analytic phonics

The following definitions of 'synthetic' and 'analytic' phonics have been taken from Greg Brooks' report *Sound Sense: The Phonics Element of the National Literacy Strategy - A Report to the Department for Education and Skills*, University of Sheffield (2003)

Synthetic phonics – refers to an approach to the teaching of reading in which phonemes [sounds] associated with particular graphemes [letters] are pronounced in isolation and blended together (synthesized). For example, children are taught to take a single-syllable word such as *cat* apart into its three letters, pronounce a phoneme for each letter in turn /k, æ, t/, and blend the phonemes together to form a word. Synthetic phonics for writing reverses the sequence: children are taught to say the word they wish to write, segment it into its phonemes and say them in turn, for example /d, ɔ, g/, and write a grapheme for each phoneme in turn to produce the written word, *dog*.

Analytic phonics – refers to an approach to the teaching of reading in which the phonemes associated with particular graphemes are not pronounced in isolation. Children identify (analyze) the common phoneme in a set of words in which each word contains the phoneme under study. For example, teacher and pupils discuss how the following words are alike: *pat, park, push* and *pen*. Analytic phonics for writing similarly relies on inferential learning: realizing that the initial phoneme in /p i g/ is the same as that in /p æ t, p a: k, p u f/ and /p e n/, children deduce that they must write that phoneme with grapheme <p>.

Glossary of terms

The following terms and their definitions have been taken from Jim Rose's (2005) *Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading - Interim Report*.

blend (vb) – to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap

cluster – two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster

(vowel) digraph – two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph. Vowel digraphs comprise two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow

split digraph – two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site

grapheme – a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')

grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) – the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'

mnemonic – a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S'

phoneme – the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

segment (vb) – to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

VC, CVC, CCVC – the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of letters in words, e.g. am, Sam, slam.