

Teaching Phonics – stories, songs, rhymes, art and play

Phonics: the role of stories, songs, rhymes, play & art

Before children can begin to decode texts, they need to have engaged in a range of literacy experiences, specifically using oral language.

When young children acquire their first language, they need time to soak it up first. Even more so when learning another language.

Early literacy is developed by being immersed in a language rich environment of songs, rhymes, stories and learning by doing.

Stories

Read lots of stories: Children's stories are full of meaningful child-friendly language as well as lots of rhyming words.

The benefits of using stories



The theme of a story provides a context.



They expose children to lots of language and develop phonological and phonemic awareness.



They have repetitive refrains, so children can learn key structures and vocabulary.



They are full of rhyming words – good for practicing vowel sounds that don't exist in the L1



Children can practise difficult to pronounce, tricky words in a fun way.

The benefits of using stories



They reflect the child's world and interests, and encourage imagination.



They have illustrations which help with comprehension.

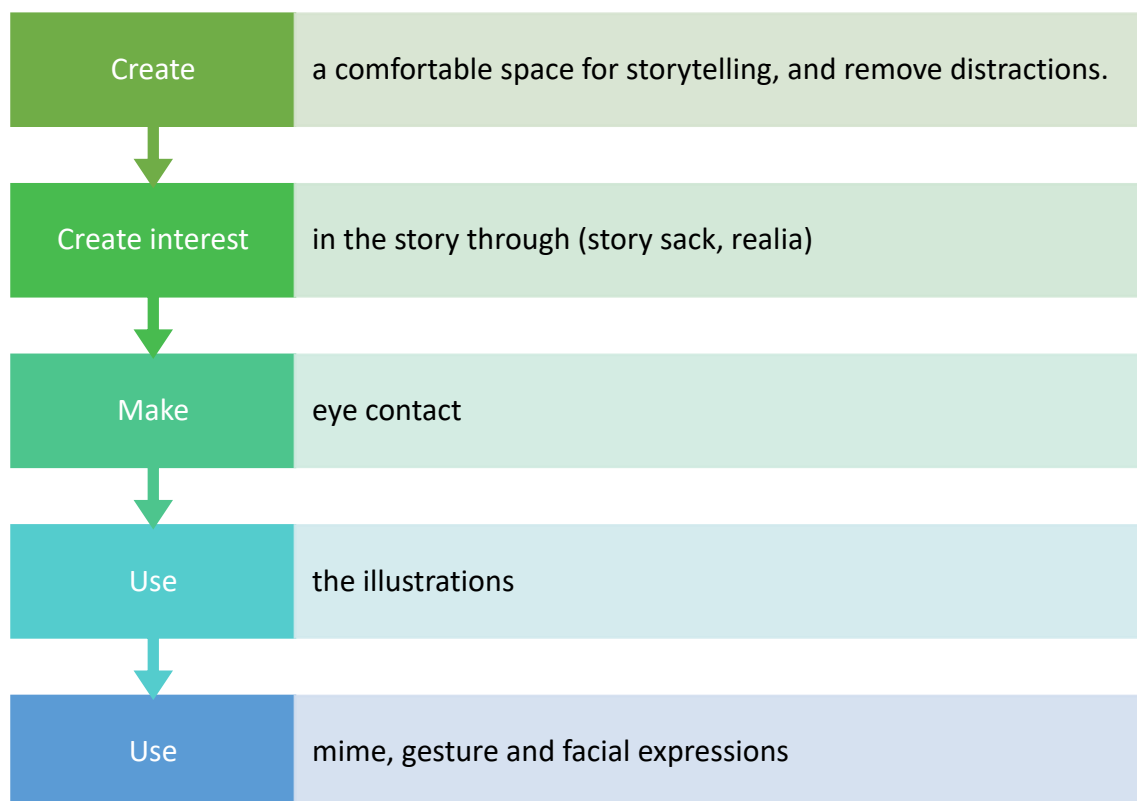


The illustrations also encourage art appreciation.



They provide a shared, cultural experience.

Storytelling tips



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Encourage	the children to join in with repeated refrains.
Prompt	the children provide the missing word/phrase/story ending, etc.
Use	intonation to emphasise key words and expressions.
Use	different voices for different characters.
Have fun!	Your enthusiasm is infectious!

How to choose a good story to work on phonological and phonemic awareness



Choose stories with rhythm.

a b c

Choose stories with rhyming words.



Choose stories that work on vowel sounds.



Choose stories with tricky words.



Don't be afraid! These stories are always lots of fun and engaging. The children **won't even realise** all the work they are doing!

Rhyming words – Over in the Meadow

sun one	blue two	tree three	shore four
beehive five	sticks six	even seven	gate eight
	shines nine	den ten	

Phonemes in the story

u	oo	ee	or
igh	i	e	ai
	igh	e	

Story suggestions

Julia Donaldson:

The Gruffalo

Room on the Broom

The Snail and the Whale

What the Ladybird Heard

Barefoot Books:

The Animal Boogie

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25_u1GzruQM&list=PL0maGUp7cdUkPJgFg9PL0CAqzSDsWo2UR

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Walking through the Jungle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plvY0quSyJg&list=PL0maGUp7cdUkPJgFg9PL0CAqzSDsWo2UR&index=5>

Over in the Meadow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6ljGXMMB-g>

Up, Up, Up

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lrd0TiER_J0&list=PL0maGUp7cdUkPJgFg9PL0CAqzSDsWo2UR&index=12

There's a Hole in the Bottom of the Sea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1Qn2bcZRT0&list=PL0maGUp7cdUkPJgFg9PL0CAqzSDsWo2UR&index=10>

Sing songs and rhymes

Songs and rhymes are also full of meaningful child-friendly language as well as lots of rhyming words.

They develop phonological and phonemic awareness.

Choosing a good song

- Simple
- Catchy
- Has language you want to practise (words, sounds, structures)

Online resources

- Super Simple Songs <https://supersimple.com/super-simple-songs/>
- BBC Nursery Songs and Rhymes
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p06ksq36?page=2>

Play

PLAY



pretend play develops **abstract thinking skills**



play develops gross and fine **motor skills**



writing labels for a pretend shop is an example of meaningful language input during play



For more ideas, visit: <https://www.britishcouncil.es/blog/juego-aprendizaje-ingles-ninos-infantil>

Make forming letters and words fun

- Write letters on each other's back and guess the letter.
- Trace lines and draw letters and words in the sandpit.
- Draw lines or letters on the playground wall with a thick paintbrush and water.
- Spray shaving cream into a tray and draw wavy lines, zig-zag lines or letters.
- Make letters out of plasticine, make letter or simple word collages out of pasta, rice, sticks or coloured fabric.

Sound out simple words

Use a ball to take turns at throwing and catching, sounding out the letters to simple words as you go.

d-o-g

p-i-g

d-u-ck

e-gg

b-a-t

b-e-d

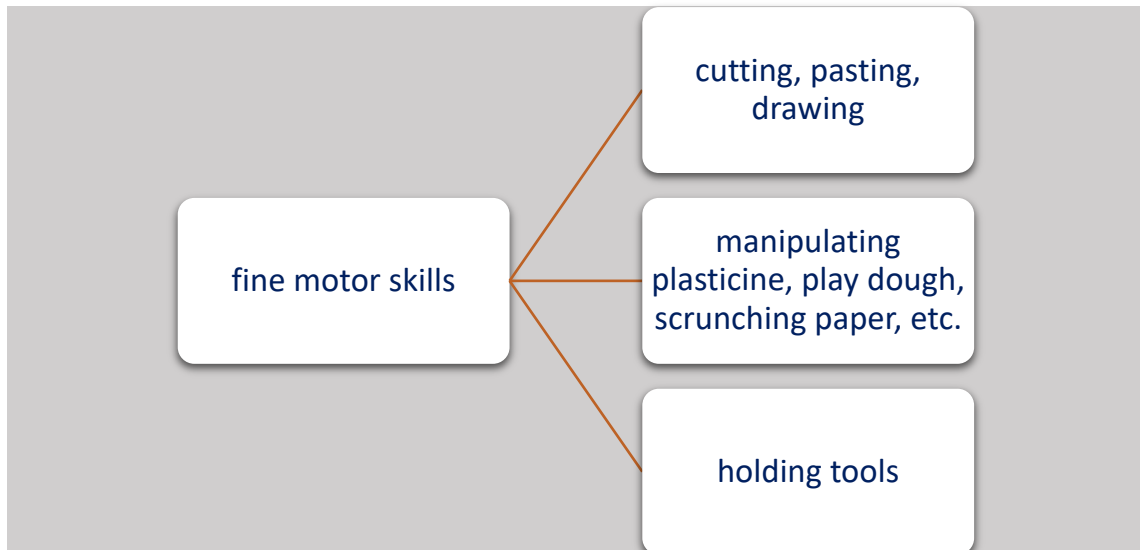
c-u-p

b-oo-k

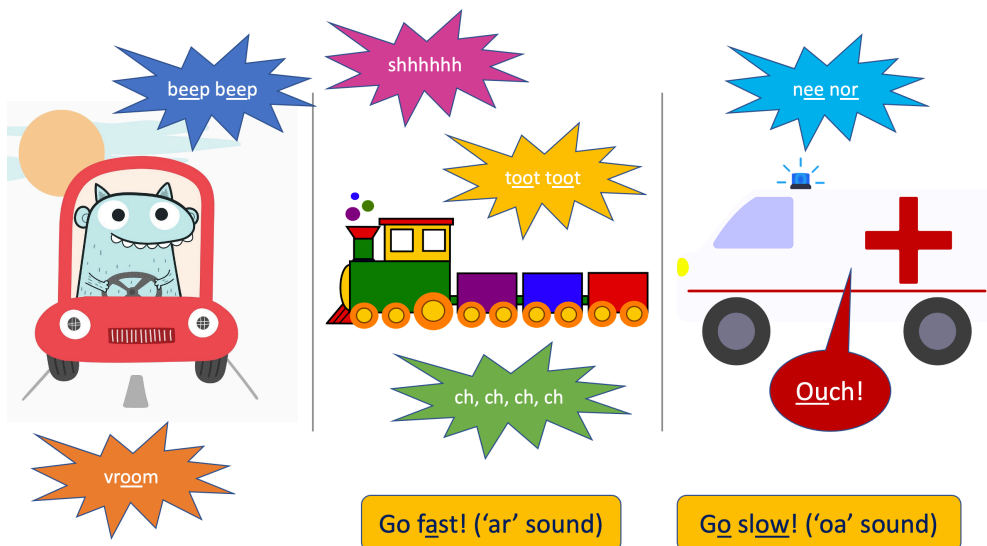
Arts and crafts

Do arts and crafts: Children develop **abstract thinking** by representing their ideas and experiences through arts and crafts.

The fine motor skills developed through **art and craft** activities will eventually lead to the pencil control needed to write letters and words.



Example of the language work the teacher can do while the children are playing or making things



To focus on phonics, play with **sounds** rather than words.