

CAREGIVER TIPS AND ACTIVITIES

PHONICS INSTRUCTION

Phonics is the relationship between letters and their sounds. This is the basis for reading. It is the most important skill that beginning readers learn. Children who have phonics instruction become better readers and spellers.

All words are made up of sounds. The word “dog” has three sounds. Each letter is one sound. The word “light” has three sounds. The letters “igh” are one sound. The English language uses 44 sounds to make all words. However, there are 26 letters in the alphabet. The vowels are a, e, i, o, u, and y at the end or in the middle of a word. The consonants are b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, z, and y at the beginning of a word. Some letters make more than one sound. Other letters combine to make new sounds. This is like a code. When a child knows the code, he or she can sound out many words. This is decoding.

Phonics is one tool for reading words. It is important for students to learn words that do not follow phonics rules. These words are called sight words because they need to be remembered when the child sees them. The most common sight word lists are Dolch Sight Words and Fry Sight Words. By practicing both decodable words and sight words, children will become fluent and successful readers.