

## Handout 7: Suggestions for teaching phonics

1. Teach the key sounds as key language; choose a 'source' word to use as your base word for a particular phoneme.

2. Choose high-frequency (or highly memorable) 'source' words that can be associated with a picture to facilitate recall.



**casa**  
frequency  
rating: 106

Image courtesy [www.rachelhawkes.com](http://www.rachelhawkes.com)

3. It may be helpful, when initially teaching the 'source' words, to use gestures. This is one possibility for 'elaborating' the form-meaning mapping. However, there is research that suggests that the use of additional, peripheral cues may dilute learners' attention and detract from the core knowledge (in this case the sound-writing relationship) and make them persistently over-reliant on cues that they won't later have access to when using the language. This is an area that is currently under-researched, particularly in the context of teaching phonics to UK L2 learners.

4. Consider carefully the selection, the number and the rate of introduction of new phonemes, particularly in orthographically deep languages, such as French.

5. In French, in particular, it may be beneficial to concentrate on distinguishing between close (but different) sounds, using 'minimal pairs', words which have just one sound different.



**blond**  
frequency rating:  
4585



**blanc**  
frequency rating:  
708

Images courtesy <http://www.clker.com>

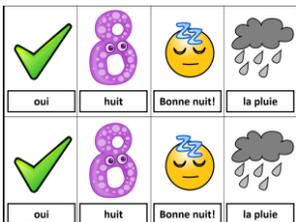
6. Use the original 'source' words to make a 'bridge' to other similar words when reading, listening, speaking and writing. This is often done spontaneously by the teacher in the course of everyday teaching, by prompting the learners to spot patterns and make links.

7. Build in planned tasks that develop the sound-writing relationship. These are many and varied, but could perhaps be usefully categorised into 'read aloud' and 'listening' tasks, although there is often overlap. Some examples of each include:

### Read aloud

i. Word card games

e.g. quiz-quiz trade, snap, happy families with sets of word cards that focus on one, two or several phonemes.



ui	ui	ui	ui
ui	ui	ui	ui

frequency ratings:  
oui – 284  
huit – 877  
nuit – 580  
la pluie - 2217

Images courtesy <http://www.clker.com>

ii. Rhyming poems

1. Ich schlafe auf einer Matratze,  
Ich bin eine kleine .....
2. Hier ist mein neues Haus,  
Hier wohnt meine liebe .....
3. Wie heißt du?  
Und wie heißt deine schöne .....
4. Was ist unter dem Tisch?  
Ach, nein, das ist mein .....



Images courtesy <http://www.clker.com>

iii. Tongue twisters

**Tres tristes tigras tragaban trigo en un trigal**

(Three sad tigers were swallowing wheat in a wheat field )



iv. Read aloud segmentation tasks

E.g.

**A** Clasifica estas palabras según el número de sílabas.

●	●●	●●●	●●●●

mal	delicado	grande	muy
robusto	pequeño	yo	feo
deportista	tan	elegante	alto
bronceado	rizado	moreno	bajo

v. Read aloud phoneme differentiation tasks

E.g.

**B** Clasifica estas palabras según el sonido -  
/ka/thé/ché

/ka/	/thé/	/ché/

una camisa	ducharse	hacer
una discoteca	un chiste	chulo
cero	una casa	cinco

vi. Read lyrics and sing along.

vii. Cognate creation (and pronunciation) tasks

**¿Cuáles son estas palabras?**

pa	ón	par	fo	li	po
nes	cho	gru	plan	fá	mi
llón	to	sta	pla	mu	te
par	ta	so	le	que	ma

1. group	2. lion	3. map	4. million
5. plant	6. list	7. park	8. photo
9. much/a lot	10. part	11. plans	12. sofa

## Listening

- i. Listen and read and spot the difference tasks (can include invitation to transcribe what is actually heard).

**Me llamo** Carlos Vicente. Soy de España pero mis padres son **de Argentina** así que soy argentino. Hablo español, **por supuesto**, inglés y un poco de francés. Vivo ahora con **mis padres**; vivimos en Valencia, en el este **del país**. Mi hermana no vive allí. Ella y su amiga **están** en Barcelona.



Transcript: Mi nombre es Carlos Vicente. Soy de España pero mis padres son argentinos así que soy argentino. Hablo español, claro, inglés y un poco de francés. Vivo ahora con mi familia; vivimos en Valencia en el este de España. Mi hermana no vive en Valencia. Ella y su amiga viven en Barcelona.

- ii. Listen and gap-fill tasks (individual phonemes) = transcription (proceed with caution, especially with French).

- iii. Listen and identify specific phonemes within individual words

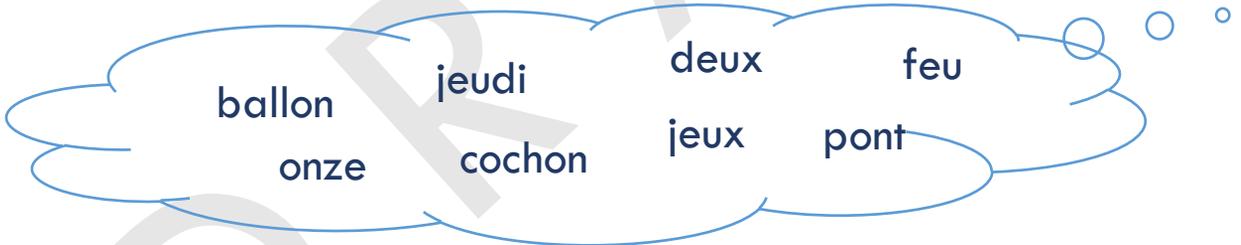
E.g.

A	B	C
au/eau	oi	eu

Possible transcript: 1 poisson / 2 trois / 3 bleu / 4 tableau / 5 feu / 6 voir / 7 cadeau

- iv. Paired pronunciation tasks

E.g. Partner A reads aloud, Partner B listens and identifies the correct word in a word cloud.



E.g. Partner A reads three words aloud. Partner B (without seeing the words) identifies the odd one out.

- |                |          |            |
|----------------|----------|------------|
| 1. a) poisson  | b) chaud | c) trois   |
| 2. a) bateau   | b) faut  | c) plus    |
| 3. a) histoire | b) feu   | c) jeux    |
| 4. a) dents    | b) soeur | c) serpent |