

Understanding Phonics and Blending

Connecting letter sounds to read simple and complex words

🎯 WHAT IS PHONICS & BLENDING?

Phonics is the relationship between letters (graphemes) and their corresponding spoken sounds (phonemes). Blending is the process of putting those individual sounds together smoothly to read complete words.

📊 HOW WE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS

- **Nonsense Word Fluency - Whole Words Read (WWR):** We use short, made-up words (like "vob") to see if children can apply their phonics skills without just memorizing the word. Our goal is for every student to be able to read these simple patterns fluently by the end of Kindergarten.
- **Core Phonics Inventory:** This is a quick check-up to see exactly which letter patterns your child knows and which ones they still need help with. It helps us pinpoint the specific "missing pieces" in their reading skills.
- **Reading Accuracy in Passages:** Starting in mid-1st grade, we listen to students read short stories. If they are making a lot of mistakes, it usually means they need more practice with their phonics and blending skills.

🏠 HOW YOU CAN HELP AT HOME

- **Practice Sounding Out:** Encourage your child to touch each letter, say its sound, and slide their finger under the word as they blend it together.
- **Use Decodable Books:** Read simple books that use predictable letter patterns your child is currently learning in school.
- **Build Words:** Use letter tiles or magnetic letters to build short words together, changing one letter at a time (e.g., *cat* → *bat* → *bit*).

🏠 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more ideas on supporting your child with reading skills, visit our district literacy website:

<https://www.ccsdut.org/programs/literacy/phonics-resources>

