

## Synthetic phonics: Best practice reading instruction

Academic and government-led research has shown that synthetic phonics is the most effective method for teaching children to read. Synthetic phonics involves identifying sets of letters and sounds; blending the sounds all the way through the word; and then segmenting the word into sounds to spell it.

### *Fast Phonics*: The essential synthetic phonics program

*Fast Phonics* is an online systematic, synthetic phonics program designed for emergent and early readers, as well as older students with gaps in their core reading knowledge. The program incorporates best practice research to engage and motivate students who are learning to read, specifically *Fast Phonics*:

- explicitly and systematically teaches, supports, reinforces and assesses the core phonics skills, including letter-sound correspondence, blending, segmenting and spelling, and syllable manipulation
- includes a range of fun videos, activities, quizzes and decodable books
- aligns with key curriculum initiatives and England's *Letters and Sounds* program
- can be used in discrete, daily classroom practise
- uses a multisensory approach to engage students
- includes assessment and reporting tools to personalise a child's learning experience and inform classroom practise
- supports the development of intrinsic motivation to read, and uses fun rewards, such as upgrades and animations, to encourage students to complete tasks and quizzes.

### *Fast Phonics* is built on solid research

The *Fast Phonics White Paper* is an in-depth review of the research literature that supports *Fast Phonics*. As described in the full report, research demonstrates:

- The complex orthography of the English language makes understanding the connection between sounds and written letters (the alphabetic principle) particularly difficult.
- Decades of academic research and comprehensive government reviews in the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States have revealed a strong consensus around the importance of systematic phonics instruction during the initial stages of learning to read. Specifically, synthetic phonics is widely recognised as best practice.
- Synthetic phonics is a 'first and fast' approach to reading instruction that teaches letter-sound relationships in an explicit and systematic sequence, so that children can rapidly decode words and read independently.
- Synthetic phonics gained prominence following a longitudinal research project in Clackmannanshire, Scotland, which linked this approach to remarkable gains in pupils' reading abilities. Additionally, in 2005, the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy recommended that teachers provide **systematic, direct and explicit phonics instruction** to ensure that children master the essential alphabetic code-breaking skills required for foundational reading proficiency.
- High quality assessment and reporting features should be included in reading programs.
- Motivation is vital to learning new skills. Children need to build their confidence when learning to read to ensure they become intrinsically motivated to practise this skill. Children also respond positively to external rewards.
- Online phonics programs can improve children's literacy.

*Fast Phonics* is the systematic, synthetic phonics program that provides a strong foundation for students' reading skills and confidence to support their successful school trajectory. The playful nature and rewarding elements of the program keep children motivated to learn, laugh and see what's next.