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Phonics 'Jargon Buster'

Below is some of the main vocabulary that we use with the children during their Phonics sessions and in their reading and writing. The language that we use may be unfamiliar to you and we hope that this 'jargon buster' helps. Please do not hesitate to ask us if anything comes up that is unclear.

Blending	To say the individual sounds that make up a word and blend them together to hear the whole word for reading e.g. s-a-t becomes sat. We say you blend to read and segment (see below) to spell.
Common Exception Words	Common words that are difficult to decode because some of the letters don't make the sounds you would expect, like 'the' or 'said'.
Decoding	To read a word by saying the sounds then joining, or blending, those sounds together to form the word. If a word can be sounded out then it is decodable.
Grapheme(s)	A written letter or group of letters that represent a sound e.g. the sound (phoneme) s can be represented by the grapheme(s) <u>s</u> in <u>sun</u> , <u>ce</u> in <u>dance</u> , <u>ss</u> in <u>dress</u> , <u>st</u> in <u>whistle</u> , <u>cy</u> in <u>cycle</u> and so on.
High frequency words	These are the words that occur most commonly in the English language. Some are decodable like 'much', whilst others are common exception words (see definition below) for example 'the'.
Phonics	A method of teaching children to read and write the English Language. It teaches children that the sounds of English are represented by letters or groups of letters.
Phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in a word represented by letters or groups of letters.
Segmenting	To write or spell a word by listening for the sounds in the word and deciding which letters represent those sounds. We say you blend to read and segment to spell.
Sounding out	To say the individual sounds that make up a word. This should always be followed by blending.