



Building Literacy

Foundation Year

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Building Literacy – Foundation Year

Version 2

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Published by My Homeschool

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Introduction

Building literacy skills can be a very controversial topic and some educators have strong opinions on it. For many years there was a movement that believed that whole word learning was the best way to learn how to read and spell. It was thought to be quicker, and it required less rules to be taught. Now the favoured approach is to teach phonics with research showing that, no matter what your child's preferred method of learning may be, letter knowledge and phonemic awareness is the best indicator for reading and spelling success.

Phonics is a way to teach reading and spelling by helping decode unfamiliar words using their sounds (**phonemes**) and their spelling (**graphemes**). Phonics helps your child build their literacy and it's a process that leads to sight-reading. In the English language, there are about 44 sounds and 200 spelling patterns that have been identified for teaching direct instruction phonics.

These spelling lists have been arranged by their sound (**phoneme**) and their spelling (**grapheme**). This helps with a child's visual memory and it also helps them to decode words. Arranging them this way means that, for example, 'zoo', 'true' and 'new' are not on the same list even though they all represent the phoneme /oo/. Likewise, 'look' and 'moon' are not on the same list because they have the same grapheme of 'oo' but different phoneme (sounds). Please Note: In this resource phonemes are represented with / / to show it is a sound rather than a spelling.

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings and **heteronyma** are words which have the same spelling but sound different depending on the context. These are also highlighted in this resource to show the students the variation. They do not need to focus on the spellings of these words as that can confuse students in their early years.

How To Study the Word Lists

While some lessons have a short note to help you teach the lessons, teaching the lessons are very straightforward. Simply teach your child to:

- **Look** closely at the words to be memorised;

- **Say** the words out loud;
- Divide words into **syllables** when appropriate;
- Find out the **meaning of the word** (if they don't already know it); and then
- **Copy** the word.

This simple process will support your child phonically reading and spelling the word. For Foundation Year child you don't even need to use a separate spelling book – simply print this resource off and guide them to trace the words provided.

Spelling Tests

For those families with children who are naturally good spellers and those who have children who love spelling, you can use this resource as a basis for creating spelling lists. This is not essential but we appreciate that some My Homeschool families like to include this as a learning tool in their homeschool.

Learning More About Phonics

This simple phonics spelling resource covers the suggested sequence for teaching spelling in Kindergarten. We used the Australian Curriculum Version 9 and the new NESA syllabus for English launched in 2022 (and for homeschoolers to implement from 2023) as a reference.

For more information on teaching phonics please look at our *Homeschool Teaching 101* course provided at <https://learn.myhomeschool.com>. Here you can learn more about the best ways to support your child to become a confident reader and speller. It includes some spelling strategies that you may wish to use in your homeschool and also provides information on how to use My Homeschool with students with dyslexia.

At My Homeschool we use a number of tools to teach English – this is just one of them. These resources and teacher helps have been crafted to address specific areas in language, literacy, and literature.

We hope you enjoy building literacy in your homeschool!

Lesson 1 - /s/, /a/, /t/, and /p/

Read Word	Copy
<i>at</i>	<i>at</i>
<i>sat</i>	<i>sat</i>
<i>pat</i>	<i>pat</i>
<i>tap</i>	<i>tap</i>
<i>taps</i>	<i>taps</i>